

Hafa Adai!

Company to build affordable, typhoon-resistant homes. **PAGE 7**
Push ceremony kicks off Operation Christmas Drop. **PAGE 8**

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Attao is incoming speaker

By JON PEREZ

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REPORTER

Rep. Blas Jonathan Attao (R-Saipan) is officially the incoming House speaker of the 21st Legislature after incumbent and incoming GOP members agreed yesterday to back the former independent lawmaker for the post.

See **ATTAO** on **Page 4**

MVA predicts a \$1.4M budget shortfall

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE

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REPORTER

With Super Typhoon Yutu directly hitting the CNMI's tourism industry,

the Marianas Visitors Authority predicts a \$1.4-million budget shortfall in fiscal year 2019, MVA managing director Christopher Concepcion said

See **MVA** on **Page 4**

Trump threatens shutdown in wild encounter with Democrats

By MATTHEW DALY and
CATHERINE LUCEY

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP)—In a wild Oval Office confrontation, President Donald Trump heatedly threatened to shut down the U.S. government Tuesday as he and Democratic leaders bickered over funding for his

See **TRUMP** on **Page 4**



4 journalists and a newspaper are *Time's* Person of the Year

By DAVID BAUDER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP)—Time magazine on Tuesday recognized journalists, including the slain Saudi

See **PERSON** on **Page 4**

This combination photo provided by *Time Magazine* shows their four covers for the "Person of the Year," announced Tuesday, Dec. 11, 2018. The covers show Jamal Khashoggi, top left, members of the *Capital Gazette* newspaper, of Annapolis, Md., top right, Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, bottom left, and Maria Ressa. The covers, which *Time* called the "guardians and the war on truth," were selected "for taking great risks in pursuit of greater truths, for the imperfect but essential quest for facts that are central to civil discourse, for speaking up, and speaking out."

TIME MAGAZINE VIA AP



INSIDE



BUSINESS

A Canadian court has granted bail to a top Huawei executive who has been arrested.

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NATION

It will cost at least \$3 billion to clear debris from homes destroyed by California wildfires.

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LIFE & STYLE

AP's 2018 breakthrough is Henry Golding of the movie 'Crazy Rich Asians.'

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Local

MVA gets 3D map of Saipan from Germany

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The Marianas Visitors Authority has acquired from Germany a three-dimensional map of Saipan that will be displayed at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

MVA board member Chris Nelson said yesterday that all the things found in the 3D painting are accurate as they are based on data that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration gave them.

Nelson said they gave the data to a designer in Germany that did the 3D painting.

"You can see the places where aggregate gets dug out," he said.

The painting is currently on display at the MVA office in San Jose. It will later be displayed at the Saipan airport. "We're very excited about it," said Nelson, adding that they are also planning to have one each for Rota and Tinian.

The idea is that, upon arriving at the airport, tourists will see from the 3D painting where their hotel is, where they are staying, and the plac-



Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Christopher Concepcion, second from left, and MVA board member Chris Nelson, third from right, and some MVA staff pose before a 3D painting map of Saipan yesterday at the MVA's office in San Jose. MVA ordered the 3D painting from Germany as part of its destination enhancement program. **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**

es they plan to visit, among other things.

Nelson said the 3D printing took about two months to make.

The hard part was air-freighting the painting from Germany to Saipan, Nelson said, as they wanted to make sure it would arrive in one piece.

With shipping, design, and all materials, the cost of the 3D printing is roughly \$13,000.

Nelson said they ordered one painting first to get an idea of how the map would look like.

MVA managing director Christopher Concepcion said the 3D painting map is part of their destination enhancement program.

Concepcion said they will work with their partners, the Commonwealth Ports Authority, Customs, and everybody else involved as to where they can display it at the airport.

"We are planning the same thing on a smaller scale on Tinian and Rota, with the same design, but not as large as Saipan because of the lack of space," he said.

Dela Cruz denies starting Rota petition

By **JON PEREZ**
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REPORTER

Pedro Dela Cruz has denied having a hand in an ongoing petition asking Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig to distance himself from the daily activities of his office due to the cases filed against him.

A source on Rota, who spoke on condition of anonymity, had said it was Dela Cruz who started the petition with a group of Rota voters.

Dela Cruz immediately denied that on the day when *Saipan Tribune* published the story yesterday. The newspaper has already corrected the online version of the story once the matter was brought to its attention.

The Rota source, who ac-

knowledge making the error, said it was actually Peter A. Camacho who submitted the articles of the petition on behalf of the movement.

Dela Cruz, in a telephone interview, told *Saipan Tribune* that Thomas A. Manglona and Abraham M. Ogo had asked him for help in drafting the petition. "[They] came to me and visited my office for assistance in drafting the petition. ...I just helped them draft the petition and I did not sign or started it. I told them that I felt the petition was late and it should have been done right after when the mayor was indicted."

"I have done this just to assist them. If I want to, I could have done it myself," said Dela Cruz.

He added that he made it clear to Manglona and Ogo that he doesn't want his name to be dragged into the issue. "As far as I'm concerned, people should come out. ... Not putting out your name is ridiculous, outrageous, and damaging."

The petition aims to get 100 signatures from Rota voters. The petition, as of yesterday, already had 65 signatures.

Atalig is accused of using government funds for several off-island trips. He has entered a not guilty plea for the four charges of conspiracy, wire fraud, theft from program receiving federal funds, and one count of false statements in his arraignment last week at the U.S. District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands.

3 MONTHS AFTER MANGKHUT

Power and water completely restored on Rota

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

Power and water have been completely restored on Rota as of Dec. 11, three months following the destruction wrought by Typhoon Mangkhut.

According to Rota Mayor's Office press secretary Ivan Mereb, water and power has been 100 percent as of Dec. 11.

Typhoon debris has also

been completely cleared from the villages and it's just a matter of reviving tourist sites.

"We are now working on tourist sites on the island and the back roads that are not paved," he said.

As for the number of homes and establishments repaired since Typhoon Mangkhut, there is currently no status report on this.

Typhoon Mangkhut made landfall on Rota back on Sept. 10, 2018. Mangkhut

was projected to intensify into a Category 4 typhoon as it approached the Marianas. A Category 4 typhoon has maximum sustained winds of 130-156 mph (209-251 kmh).

In comparison, according to a Wikipedia entry, the Joint Typhoon Warning Center assessed Typhoon Soudelor, which hit Saipan in August 2015, as a Category 5-equivalent super typhoon, with a minute sustained winds of 180 mph (285 kmh).

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FEMA purchases 4 new ambulances for the NMI

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has purchased four new ambulances for the CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services. The vehicles are expected to arrive in 2019.

During the annual Western Pacific Islands Association Fire Chief conference at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan yesterday, Clyde Norita, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services commissioner, said that, despite the destruction Super Typhoon Yutu, wrought on the CNMI, it also served as a blessing in disguise for DFEMS.

"This Yutu typhoon might have been a blessing in disguise. ...FEMA has bought the fire department four new ambulances...three for Saipan and one for Tinian because their ambulance went down during the typhoon," he said.

According to Norita, the company making the ambulances went into production

in November and the new vehicles are expected to arrive in early 2019.

"I was informed by FEMA that the ambulances went into production on Nov. 20 and they should be here by the end of January or early February," he said.

FEMA did not just purchase four brand new ambulance units for the CNMI, but hand radios as well.

"FEMA has also bought the department 40 new radios. We only had 20 radios and they are over 15 years old," Norita said.

He said the department is grateful that FEMA saw the need in the CNMI and filled the need.

Norita said that aside from the new ambulance units, the department is also expecting two new fire trucks capable of storing up to 1,000 gallons of water.

"We just signed the contract for two new...1,000-gallon, four-door pumper trucks. ... Production time is about 280 days," he said.

UOG board elects new chair

The University of Guam board of regents elected Christopher K. Felix as its chairperson last Nov. 15 to fill the vacancy left by outgoing chair Elizabeth C. "Betty" Gayle, who has served a year in the seat and has fulfilled her six-year term on the board. Felix will serve as chairperson until the board holds its regular elections in April.

Felix was appointed by Gov. Edward B. Calvo to serve on the board from November 2013 to November 2019. During his tenure, he served four years as chairperson of the Student Affairs, Scholarship, Alumni Relations, and Honorary Degree Committee and as the chairperson of the Physical Facilities Committee from 2017-2018.

"Mr. Felix [is] an engaged and dedicated member of our local community and of our board. We look forward to his leadership as we continue to evolve the University," said UOG president Thomas W. Krise.

Krise also thanked Gayle for her service, saying, "Ms. Gayle has been a dynamic part of the board, and we are so grateful for her service. She was instrumental in managing the transition to a new president, which was an especially active period in the board's history."

During Gayle's six-year tenure on the board from August 2012 to October 2018,

she served on the President Search Committee from 2017-2018 and also as chair of the Physical Facilities Committee for two years and chair of the President Evaluation Committee for two years, among others. She was elected vice chair of the board from 2016-2017 and chairperson in 2017.

To fill the empty seat on the board, the governor has appointed Sandra H. McKeever, CEO and president of Asia Pacific Financial Management Group. She will serve until July 2024 and is presently on the Investment Committee and the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee.

The other officers remain the same: Jillette T. Leon Guerrero as vice chairperson and Elvin Y. Chiang as treasurer. The board members-at-large remain Mari Flor Herrero, Hyo Sang Ji, Jerold W. Filush, Liza J. Provido, and Annie Fay Camacho as student regent. Krise serves as executive secretary.

The board of regents has general supervision over the university and meets no fewer than four times per year. The board sets the policies governing the duties, conditions of employment, compensation, and salary of all University employees and also submits an annual budget to the Legislature. (UOG)



Felix



SEASON OF GIVING

Pacifica Insurance donates toys to the U.S. Marine Corps/Saipan Young Professionals' Toys for Tots Program.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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EXPLORE
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Torres to head Pacific Basin Development Council

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres was elected chairman of the Pacific Basin Development Council during the first day of the Western Governors Association in Kohala Coast, Hawaii.

PBDC is a regional non-profit organization that advances economic and social development in the Pacific Islands. The organization, which is based in Hawaii, is made up of the heads of state for Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, and the CNMI.

In a statement, Torres thanked the outgoing chairman, Guam Gov. Eddie Calvo, for his leadership and support during his tenure as chairman.

“It’s a great honor to be provided this opportunity to

advocate for our region in advancing economic stability and resilience,” Torres said.

He said he looks forward to working alongside the current and incoming leaders of the region in addressing longstanding economic issues affecting the people of the Pacific states and territories.

“The next decades will showcase the importance and beauty of the Pacific and PBDC will be critical for all our islands to continue the work of supporting greater standards of living for our peoples.”

PBDC was established in 1980 by the governors of Guam, American Samoa, the CNMI, and Hawaii.

Other Hawaii commitments

especially Trump, interrupted the others to question facts, quibble over election results and lob insults.

Trump questioned Pelosi’s ability to count votes in her own House. She questioned his manhood—after she left the building.

The public clash marked Trump’s first meeting with the newly empowered Democrats since their midterm victories that put them in control

Torres is in Hawaii to attend several meetings that aims to address issues that concern the Pacific region, including the United States’ efforts to lift the quota on tuna fishing.

Torres, who joined other members of their family to celebrate Thanksgiving with his mother in Idaho, also attended the state funeral of the late U.S. President George H.W. Bush and the signing of a joint promotional agreement between Skymark Airlines and the CNMI to re-open direct flights between Japan and Saipan.

Senate President Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan) is acting governor; Lt. Gov. Victor B. Hocog is with Torres.

Torres also attended the 15th regular session of the Western and Central Pacific

of the House, laying bare the tensions on both sides and suggesting how divided government might work—or not—as the 2020 presidential election nears.

Neither the public nor the private face-to-face portion of the meeting appeared to resolve the wall-funding dispute with a partial shutdown looming on Dec. 21. However, Pelosi said Trump called her later

Fisheries Commission meeting at the Hawaii Convention Center in Honolulu. The meeting began last Dec. 9 and ends tomorrow.

“As a participating territory of the commission, we share many commonalities with our brothers and sisters of the Pacific islands,” Torres said in his remarks. ... “We have fisheries resources but lack access to capital needed to institute large-scale fisheries operations. In this regard, the CNMI is interested in how the commission can assist some members and territories to obtain increased benefits and capacity.”

He added that the CNMI hosted the 23rd Micronesian Islands Forum where member states and territories adopted two resolutions regarding fish-

in the afternoon and told her the White House was looking at options she and Schumer had laid out.

In the public debate, Trump sounded more determined than ever to allow a partial government shutdown unless he gets the billions he wants for his long-promised wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.

“I will take the mantle. I will be the one to shut it down,” he declared.

to make everyone’s lives a lot better,” said Deleon Guerrero.

Sablan added: “Thank you too for the confidence. Like incoming vice speaker [Deleon Guerrero] said, I also look forward to working harmoniously with everyone, together with the members of the minority.”

The incoming House leadership had also chosen the chairman of each of the nine committees. They dissolved two committees and merged it with the previous working groups that was formed in order to accommodate two incoming members of the 20th Legislature.

Guerrero retains the Commerce and Tourism Committee, Roman Benavente is back as Education chair, neophyte legislator Castro gets Federal and Foreign Affairs, Yumul will be the Gaming head. Camacho is the incoming Judicial and Government Operations chair, while Tinian’s Borja will take over as the Natural Resources head. Both are also new House members, along with Castro, the outgoing Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council chair.

The Transportation Committee, previously chaired by Rep. Donald C. Barcinas, will be merged with the Public Utilities and Communications, with Dela Cruz keeping his post. Blanco would take over the Ways & Means committee.

Other posts

Lorenzo Deleon Guerrero was elected as House vice speaker, while J.P. Sablan was chosen to be the floor leader.

“It is a privilege and honor to be offered the position. Now, let’s work together in the 21st Legislature. We’re going to do this smoothly and collaborate with our counterparts in order

eries. “The MIF leaders committed to combating illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing in Micronesia, and recognize the need for funding and capacity-building assistance from national and intergovernmental partners and non-governmental organizations.”

Pacific islands nations have long opposed the U.S.’ proposal to increase catch limit in the world’s largest fishing ground of tuna. The Pacific holds 60 percent of the world’s tuna fishery that amounts to \$6 billion annually.

Australia, China, Canada, the Cook Islands, the Europe-

an Economic Community, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, South Korea, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Chinese Taipei, Tonga, Tuvalu, U.S., and Vanutu are the commission members.

American Samoa, French Polynesia, Guam, New Caledonia, Tokelau, and Wallis and Futuna are the participating territories aside from the CNMI, while Ecuador, El Salvador, Liberia, Mexico, Panama, Thailand, and Vietnam are cooperating non-members.

PERSON

From Page 1

columnist Jamal Khashoggi, as its 2018 Person of the Year in what it said was an effort to emphasize the importance of reporters’ work in an increasingly hostile world.

The designation wasn’t intended as a specific message to the magazine’s runner-up choice, President Donald Trump, who has denounced “fake news” and called some reporters enemies of the people, said Ben Goldberger, executive editor.

Time cited four figures it called “the guardians.” Be-

sides Khashoggi, they are the staff of the Capital Gazette in Annapolis, Maryland, where five people were shot to death in June; Philippine journalist Maria Ressa; and Reuters reporters Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, who have been jailed in Myanmar for a year.

It’s the first time since the magazine began the end-of-year tradition in 1927 that Time has featured a journalist or recognized someone posthumously.

Time said that 2018 has been marked by manipulation and abuse of information, along with efforts by governments to foment mistrust of the facts.

TRUMP

From Page 1

promised border wall and offered a grim preview of life in Washington the next two years under divided government.

Trump and House and Senate Democratic leaders Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer squabbled for more than 15 minutes in the stunning, televised encounter. Each of them,

ATTAO

From Page 1

Things will be formalized on Jan. 14, the inauguration of the 21st CNMI Legislature.

Representatives-elect Joel C. Camacho, Luis John Castro, and Antonio SN Borja of Tinian, along with returning Roman C. Benavente and Ralph N. Yumul, and incumbents Ivan A. Blanco, Francisco S. Dela Cruz, Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero, Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero, Jose I. Itibus, and John Paul P. Sablan backed Attao’s bid for the House’s top post.

Eight House members previously expressed support for Attao, four of them his colleagues in Precinct 3—Blanco, Dela Cruz, Itibus, and Yumul.

Another who was also eyeing the post, vice speaker Janet U. Maratita, is currently off-island to attend to some personal matters.

Attao, the son of former lawmaker and Ways and Means chair, Rep. Jesus Attao, said he appreciates the vote of confidence shown him by the House GOP. “I appreciate the support since we worked hard to get us through the election process, both individually and a team under the GOP family.”

“Now that the election is over, we’re moving to set up the House leadership. I really appreciate the vote of confi-

dence from the members for entrusting me the position of House speaker for the incoming Legislature.”

He added that the bloc that supports him called for the meeting to finalize the House leadership one month before the inauguration. “We called the meeting to finish up the caucus for the leadership of the 21st Legislature so that we can move on and enjoy the holidays with our families and friends.”

“Also, to prepare for the inauguration with the outgoing members to begin packing their things, so incoming members can move in to their offices. So, we don’t have to worry about that heading into the inauguration and...so we don’t need to spend the next two weeks relocating stuff.”

He added that settling the House leadership would give them the chance to begin work soon after Jan. 14. “The main goal of the 13 [GOP House members] is to make sure we solidify our ranks and keep everything within the 13.”

“We can also report that the House is already set and ready to move on. To work with the members of the Senate and the community—both the private and public sectors—the administration, and our brothers and sisters from the region.”

Attao will be the 15th speaker since the first legislature was inaugurated in January 1978 and joins a long list of

past leaders of the House that include the late Oscar C. Rasa, former governor Benigno R. Fitial, Oscar M. Babauta, and ex-lieutenant governor Diego T. Benavente.

Benavente served as speaker from the 9th to the 11th Legislature while Fitial (3rd and 14th), Babauta (12th and 15th), Pedro R. Deleon Guerrero (6th and 7th), and Rafael S. Demapan (19th and 20th) held the position twice.

Joaquin I. Pangelinan, Vicente M. Sablan, Jose R. Lifofoi, Thomas P. Villagomez, Heinz Hofschneider, Arnold I. Palacios, Eliceo D. Cabrera, Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero were the other members that became speakers of the House.

The 39-year-old Attao is a former independent candidate during the 19th and 20th Legislatures but joined the local Republican Party in his bid to win a third term in the general elections last November. The GOP remains the majority in the House with seven members as independents.

MVA

From Page 1

yesterday.

He blames a projected decrease in hotel occupancy tax collections on flight cancellations and the lack of tourists one month after Yutu’s devastation.

The Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport shut down after Yutu hit Saipan and Tinian last Oct. 24 and 25. The first international flight to Saipan only resumed last Nov. 22 with Hong Kong Express.

With the budget shortfall, Concepcion said MVA has to cut programs and some other items that they were planning to do because they cannot afford to them now.

“So we are going to reduce our budget,” he said at yesterday’s MVA board meeting.

The programs and services that will be affected by the cuts are ad hoc promotion, professional services, advertising Saipan and Rota, tour guide certification, office rental, computer systems, assets, U.S./Guam promotion, gold campaign support, anniversary promotion, destination enhancement building fund, and support to municipalities.

Concepcion said the proposed adjustment to the fiscal year 2019 budget will be a cut of \$740,717.

The board approved the proposed budget cut.

Concepcion later said in an interview that the biggest chunk of the adjustment is the ad hoc promotion committees in the amount of \$520,000.

He said the MVA board established the ad hoc committees many years ago. He said MVA is providing little funding to these ad hoc committees in Japan, China, and Korea.

“That is the big chunk that we are going to be cutting for this fiscal year, \$520,000. And the rest is really small,” Concepcion said.

He said for the first quarter they project \$170,000 in collection, but that they need a million dollars every month to be able to pay their bills.

“So it is totally inadequate for us to be able to do our work,” he said.

Concepcion said they are trying to live within their means so they looked at their budget internally.

“But we definitely feel that we are going to need the support of the Legislature in case we need additional funding for marketing,” he added.

MVA’s projected revenue for fiscal year 2019 was \$15.8 million.

After the \$740,000 reduction in the budget, available funding for MVA operations, after provisions for Department of Finance reduction, is \$14.6 million.

'Lower wharfage fee not intended to benefit company'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Emergency regulations that reduced the wharfage rate for prefabricated modular units by half is intended to help the people of Saipan and Tinian and not to benefit just one company.

This was emphasized by Commonwealth Ports Authority board member Pete Reyes, who chairs the board's seaport facilities committee.

Wharfage refers to the fee charged by the terminal on passage of a cargo or merchandise through it.

Reyes said the emergency regulations that the board adopted last Nov. 27 creates a new tariff schedule for different kinds of items brought to the CNMI in response to Super Typhoon Yutu's devastation.

"Many homes are destroyed and one way to rebuild at a very reasonable cost is to change this wharfage, the tariff to allow for our people to bring in modular units," said Reyes Monday after the CPA board's committees' meeting.

The emergency change slashed the wharfage fee on prefabricated modular units by 50 percent.

The issue was discussed again during Monday's committee meeting as there was confusion whether it was approved or not by the board.

Those with homes that were destroyed by the typhoon can bring in these materials that are already prefabricated such as restroom, kitchen, and other sections that will just be placed in the structure's foundation.

Reyes said the price of using these prefabricated modular units is lower by half than building a concrete house.

"The benefit of this is there is no need for additional requirement of CW [workers] because you don't need to build a unit that requires the division of rooms and staff like that. All you need to do is plug in the wires and pipes and the electricity and have a home," he said.

Reyes said the CNMI does not have any wharfage designation for this kind of containerized modular homes because it was never anticipated to bring in these materials. Hammering out the wharfage regulation for this material would encourage its importation, he said.

"This is a new thing in the market," said Reyes, adding that they needed to come up with something attractive so that it can be brought in.

"There is no heavy reliance on carpenters, construction workers and there is no construction waste that is going to burden our dumpsites," he pointed out.

Reyes said that changing the tariff schedule will not benefit just one company. It is open to any company that is willing to look into this and

bring it in and offer this kind of service, he said.

At the seaport facilities committee meeting last July 27, Tom Liu, of Saipan Globe, announced that the company will be bringing in customized metal modular containers to build a nine-story hotel and two-story villas beside the fire station in San Roque.

According to the minutes of the meeting, Liu said the modular units will be pre-assembled and can withstand winds of 175 mile per hour.

Liu said that based on an \$11.40 wharfage fee, it will cost \$1,600 to ship in each unit. With the 50 percent discount, it will cost just \$800 per unit. The shipment weighs 22 tons.

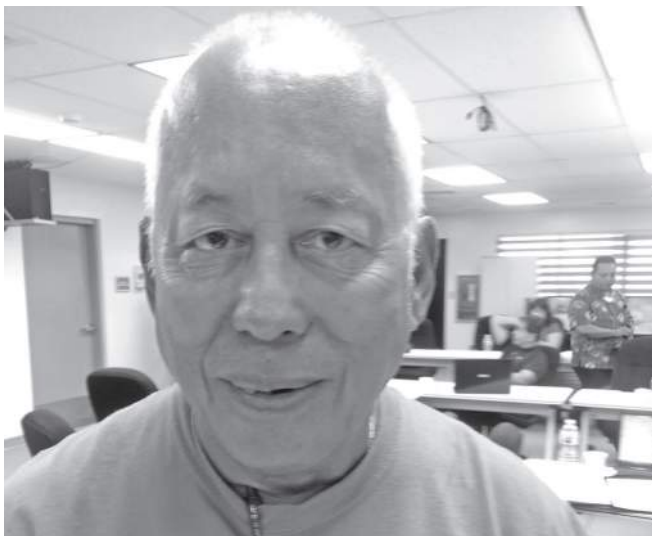
He said their structural engineer in Guam took a lot of time in designing this and the building requirements were approved by the Department of Public Works.

Saipan Globe's plan is to bring in 600 units.

When asked about the unit's multiplier effects, Liu said that, using the modular units, hotels could be built faster, there will be job opportunities, little waste, and each unit could be used for anything—a home, office, and others.

CPA board director Kimberly King-Hinds, who agreed that the amount of waste would be lessened by using these modular units, opposed reducing the wharfage rate of \$11.40.

At that same July 27 committee meeting, CPA board director Barrie C. Toves moved to amend the Terminal Tariff Regulations to add a



Commonwealth Ports Authority board member Pete Reyes chairs the board's seaport facilities committee.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

subsection which would state "wharfage for prefabricated modular units which contain completely assembled structures and shall not contain cargo, shall be: Per Revenue Ton \$5.75."

Board director Thomas Villagomez seconded Toves' motion. No one opposed so the motion was passed for board's action at the board meeting.

After the board's approval, the amendment is to be published in the *Commonwealth Register* for comments.

At the Nov. 3 board meeting, by a 5-1 vote, the board approved the emergency regulation. It was only Villagomez who noted "no." Villagomez did not explain why he was against it.

Those in favor were Reyes, King-Hinds, Roman Tudela Sr., Barrie Toves, and Joe Diaz.

The wharfage issue was discussed again last Monday as to whether the emergency

regulations was approved by the board or just at the committee level.

Reyes said Villagomez is entitled to his own opinion and that he believes the director is just concerned that this was brought as an emergency regulation as opposed to a regular regulation.

Reyes said Villagomez and Tudela argued at last Monday's meeting that this was only approved by the committee and it did not go to the board.

Reyes said the emergency regulation was approved in the committee and then the board approved it in a special board meeting.

With the board's approval there was no need to go through the *Commonwealth Register*, Reyes said.

However, he pointed out, the regular regulation that addresses the same thing is going to be approved by the board at

the next meeting.

Reyes disclosed that there are three companies that are already availing of this wharfage tariff.

"It's open and most especially on Tinian because the cost of building a home on Tinian is more expensive than it costs to build a home on Saipan," he said.

Reyes said the cost of all the materials that were used for homes and the cost of shipping it to Tinian have created a burden for many residents on Tinian and Rota.

"This is something that is readily available at a very affordable price," he said.

As to a concern that CPA is losing thousands of dollars in revenue for the initial shipment of a company after the emergency regulations took effect, Reyes disagreed.

"How can you lose something that you don't bring in? They were estimating on a hypothetical import. So, if you talk about hypothetical income you don't take that income to the bank and deposit it," he said.

"When you create a demand for something like this, then the supplies will come, along with the demand and that's how you create an economy," he said.

Reyes said some people think this is being done for just one company. "It's not. It's being done for our people. The concern here is our folks, our people, our residents of the CNMI," Reyes said.

At Monday's meeting, Tudela said he specifically asked about the board's approval of the tariff.

Tudela recalls mentioning that he supports the intent. "Up to now I support the in-

tent," he said.

Tudela said, however, it was approved during a committee level, but he does not recall that the board actually approved it.

"The process is where I got confused. I was hoping for this issue to come to the board for final approval," he said.

King-Hinds said she asked to expedite the regulations after Yutu's devastation. "We have gone through the process with the announcement and we adopted it," said King-Hinds.

Tudela said he does not have a problem with the regulations but it's like "we're jumping." "It just it did not go through the process," he added.

From what he recalls, CPA in-house counsel Joseph Hallahan said the regulations went to the board after the committee meeting.

King-Hinds said all the emergency regulations' intent was to move the modular units forward in light of Super Typhoon Yutu.

"There are other companies now shipping in the modular units. I know that for a fact. It's not just one company. It may seem that way but it's not one company," King-Hinds said.

King-Hinds and Reyes there are three companies shipping in modular units, which are designed for homes and even private offices.

Tudela said he thinks it's high time to move forward.

Reyes said the wharfage issue has been discussed for a long time and then Yutu came and they need to address the housing problem to help the affected people.

"So, we acted to address that. It's properly approved," Reyes pointed out.

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Vox Populi: Expectations as classes resume

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



“A lot of writing about the typhoon, our experiences, mainly that as topics. I am excited to

come back to class because it has been boring at home. I am looking forward to going home.”

— **Mariah Aldan, Marianas High School junior**

“We are going to talk about the typhoon and our experiences. I am pretty much excited for my first day, and looking forward to doing more [school]work. Of course, I miss my friends.”

— **Junior Dhongram, MHS freshman**

“I am looking forward to

coming back to class and learning to get our school started because we basically missed a lot of stuff because of the typhoon. I just want to get back to learning. I didn't really miss my friends because we were just hanging out during the break—it just the school I miss. I really missed the school.”

— **Andre Reyes, MHS senior**



“I am looking forward to how the classes are going to continue, especially since we stopped in the middle of the quarter. It has been almost two months that we have been out of school and I know that a lot of our [school]work were unfinished, so I am kind of looking forward to continuing our work.”

— **Bernadette Javier, MHS senior**

“Being back to school feels like just any other day. I am looking forward to all the as-

signments and the unfinished work. ... I am really looking forward continuing my classes.”

— **Abel Deleon Guerrero, MHS junior**



“I expect a lot of work. But I heard we won't be doing much [today]. I am looking forward to meeting with my classmates and friends because I also want to catch up with and ask if they are doing well and that. I only have second and third period since I am a faculty assistant today.”

— **Andrei Manalo, MHS senior**



“I am honestly not expecting anything because, after a disaster like this, the teachers want students to have closure and have them express what they are feeling after the typhoon because it has been a traumatizing experience. I am looking forward to meeting my classmates and friends because everybody was worried about each other and we haven't had time to check on each other because we all had to clean our houses and make sure we had food and water. I am kind of excited for the first day of classes.”

— **Ainah T. Chargualaf, MHS junior**



“We are excited to bring back the children and we are super excited to welcome them back. ... Students were greeted with warm smiles and big hugs; it was very nice.”

— **Education Commissioner Glenn Muña**



“I'm not expecting much today. I feel like we are just going to talk about our typhoon experience; see how everyone is doing; see what to look forward to here in school; and how to adjust to everything. I don't expect to get back to where we were last year or earlier in the year. It's something that can't be ignored—it was a big typhoon. I am kind of glad to be back at school because there isn't much to do at home but work and we don't have power.”

— **Halle Kenty, MHS senior**



“I am looking forward to graduating because I really want to go to college. I am looking forward to passing classes so that I could fulfill my goals. I was looking forward to Hawaii or Seattle [for college]. I want to take up nursing. I am honestly happy to see my classmates, and I kind of like home. It's different here [in school] than at home. I feel more relaxed at home and more comfortable [at school].”

— **Reigna T. Niro, MHS senior**



COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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PUBLIC NOTICE

December 13, 2018

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CDA) THRU ITS VICE-CHAIRMAN, HEREBY INFORMS THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE CDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL HOLD A REGULAR MEETING ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2018 AT 10:00 A.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE CDA CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, CDA BUILDING, SAN JOSE VILLAGE, SAIPAN. THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

AGENDA

- I. Preliminary Matters
 - A. Roll Call
 - B. Adoption of Agenda
 - C. Adoption of Minutes
 1. November 19, 2018
- II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
- III. REPORTS
 - A. Executive Director's Report
 1. Administrative/Personnel Matters
 2. Loan Matters
 - a. Judgment Debts
 - b. Loan Pay-Off
 - c. Diversified Loan Programs
 3. Qualifying Certificate (QC) Program Matters/Economic Dev. Activities
 - a. HCR Consulting, LLC Proposal
 - b. MyPros Proposal
 - B. Comptroller's Report
 - C. Legal Counsel's Report
- IV. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Housing Financing
 - B. Agricultural Fair & Fishermen's Derby
 - C. CPA Resolution
- V. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Post Modern Apprenticeship - Joint Participation Program
 - B. Pacific Basin Development Council
 - C. Garapan Revitalization/MFH Enterprises
- VI. OTHER MATTERS
- VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
- VIII. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session).

/s/ Benjamin K. Petersburg
Vice-Chairman, CDA Board of Directors

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL RFP NO.: RFP19-OPD-031

SUBMISSION DATE: DECEMBER 27, 2018 • TIME: 09:30 A.M.

“HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGERY OF SAIPAN, TINIAN, AND ROTA FOR THE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (OPD)”

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS PROJECT CAN BE MADE TO **MR. KODEP OGUMORO-ULUDONG, DIRECTOR OF OPD**, BY EMAIL TO Kodep.uludong@gov.mp **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, DECEMBER 20, 2018.**

PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE IS SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 19, 2018 AT 10:00 A.M., LOCAL TIME AT THE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN CAPITOL HILL, LOCATED ON THE 1ST FLOOR, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE. THE PREPROPOSAL CONFERENCE IS NOT MANDATORY.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ **ELIZABETH S. BALAJADIA**
ACTING DIRECTOR, OPD

/s/ **JOSEPH A. TUDELA**
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S



Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality

Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp



Janice E. Castro
Director, DCRM

NOTICE MEETING OF THE CRM AGENCY OFFICIALS

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog through the Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) hereby give notice that a CRM Agency Officials meeting will be held on **Wednesday, December 19 2018, 9:30AM** at the BECQ 2nd Floor Main Conference Room, in Lower Gualo Rai, Saipan.

AGENDA

- I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
 - A. Call to Order
 - B. Roll Call
 - C. Adoption of Agenda
 - D. Adoption of December 03, 2018 Meeting Minutes
- II. PERMIT APPLICATION REVIEW
 - A. Project: NEW CENTURY HOTEL – The New Century Hotel, LLC is proposing to renovate and convert an existing three-story office building to a forty-eight (48) room hotel operation. The hotel will include 36 parking spaces – 2 ADA compliance parking stalls, 27 guests parking, and 7 for hotel operation use. The building is connected to the CUC power, water, and sewer line. The project site is located in Tanapag Village south of Tanapag Elementary School, east of the Youth Center, and west of Chalan Pale Arnold Road. The size of the property is approximately 1,800 square meters, more or less.
CRM Permit Application No. SMS-2019-X-001
 - 1) Agencies' Discussion of Application Status
 - 2) Agencies' Permit Conditions
 - 3) CRM Permit Application Final Determination
 - B. Project: LUCKING HOTEL – The USA Fanter Corp., Ltd. is proposing to construct a four-story hotel building with 39 guest rooms and 28 parking stalls including 1 ADA parking. The first floor will include 28 automated parking with 1 ADA, a small office space, service elevator, water catchment, and a backup generator. The second, third, and fourth floor will each have 13 guest rooms.
CRM Permit Application No. SMS-2019-X-003
 - 1) Agencies' Discussion of Application Status
 - 2) Agencies' Permit Conditions
 - 3) CRM Permit Application Final Determination
- III. OTHER MATTERS
- IV. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony regarding the above agenda items. (NOTE: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session).

/s/ **JANICE E. CASTRO**
Director, DCRM

Matthew T. Gregory, Esq., F0205
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Attorney for Petitioner Pamela C. Sablan

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF) Civil Action
THE ESTATE OF) No: 18 -0457
MARIA M. SABLAN,) NOTICE OF HEARING
Deceased.) FOR LETTERS OF
	ADMINISTRATION

TO: ALL HEIRS, DEVISEES, LEGATEES,
AND CREDITORS OF MARIA M. SABLAN,
DECEASED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Petitioner, PAMELA C. SABLAN has filed with the Clerk of this Court a Petition for Letters of Administration for the ESTATE OF MARIA M. SABLAN, deceased. The attorney of record is the Law Office of Matthew T. Gregory, LLC, Suite 603 Marianas Business Plaza, PMB 419, Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950.

The petition is set for hearing at 9:00 a.m. on December 20, 2018 at the U.S. District Courthouse, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any person who has any objection to the petition may file his or her objection with the Superior Court at any time before the hearing to present such objection or interest in the above captioned matter.

Creditors and all persons having claims against the Decedent or of her estate are hereby notified that they must file their claims with the Clerk of Court of the Superior Court within sixty (60) days of the first publication of this Notice, or the claims will be forever barred.

Dated this 12th day of December, 2018.

PATRICK V. DIAZ
Clerk of Court
/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

Company to build affordable, typhoon-resistant homes

LOS ANGELES—Hunt Capital Partners announced yesterday the closing of \$34 million in federal low-income housing tax credit equity financing for the new construction of Art Ridge Village Homes on Saipan.

Set to be built as a seven-story high-rise building, Art Ridge Village Homes will provide 48 affordable three-bedroom housing units to families earning up to 60 percent of the area median income.

“Art Ridge Village Homes will be an important affordable housing community for families across the island,” said

Hunt Capital Partners executive managing director Dana Mayo. “Its notable typhoon-resistant features will provide enhanced tenant safety and greater peace of mind. We also want to thank our primary investors, First Hawaiian Bank and Bank of Hawaii, for partnering with us on this development.”

Located 120 miles northeast of Guam, Saipan is home to 48,000 residents. It was recently hit by Category 5 Super Typhoon Yutu in October. Reported to be the worst storm to hit the U.S. since 1935, Yutu destroyed 462 homes on Saipan. Damage from the

storm has only elevated the need for safe and secure affordable housing.

When completed in December 2019, Art Ridge Village Homes will be built to withstand typhoons and earthquakes typical to the region. The building itself will be built of reinforced concrete and impact-resistant windows capable of enduring impacts of at least 175 mph. There will be a 50,000-gallon water reservoir and backup generator with a 3,000-gallon propane fuel tank. These features enable the building to continue to provide power

and running water for about a week in the event public utilities are down following a major storm.

The total development cost for Art Ridge Village Homes is \$35 million. Hunt Capital Partners facilitated the investment of federal tax credit equity through multiple proprietary funds, including Hunt Capital Partners Tax Credit Fund 28 with FHB as well as Hunt Capital Partners Tax Credit Fund 29 with BOH. FHB provided construction financing for the transaction via a \$27.9 million construction loan.

Triple J Enterprises Inc., its subsidiaries and its affiliates, are serving as the developer, guarantor, general contractor, and property manager of the development. Black Micro Corp. is the prime subcontractor. The project architect is Mark Ruth, principal at Taniguchi Ruth Makio Architects.

About

Hunt Capital Partners is the syndication division of Hunt Companies, Inc. HCP specializes in the syndication of federal and state low-income housing, historic and solar tax

credits. Since the successful launch of its first fund in the fall of 2011, HCP has raised over \$1.6 billion in tax credit equity. Founded in 1947, Hunt is a privately-held company that invests in businesses focused in the real estate and infrastructure markets. The activities of Hunt's affiliates and investors include investment management, mortgage banking, direct lending, loan servicing, asset management, property management, development, construction, consulting and advisory. For more information on Hunt Capital Partners, visit www.huntcapitalpartners.com, or for Hunt Companies, visit www.hunt-companies.com. (PR)

9th Circuit affirms denial of ex-Army Reserve's motion to dismiss indictment

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit has affirmed the U.S. District Court for the NMI's denials of a former U.S. Army Reserve member's motion to dismiss the indictment filed against him.

Circuit Judges Kim McLane Wardlaw and Mark J. Bennett determined that U.S. District Court for the NMI senior judge Alex R. Munson, who presided over the trial of Jordan M. Jucutan, correctly concluded that the criminal indictment against Jucutan was not barred by the five-year statute of limitations.

Wardlaw and Bennett said Munson did not err by con-

cluding that the Wartime Suspension of Limitations Act applied to toll the five-year limitations period.

Circuit Judge Marsha S. Berzon, however, dissented. She said Munson erred in concluding that the Wartime Suspension of Limitations Act applies to the wire fraud and aggravated identity theft charge against Jucutan.

“I disagree with the majority's conclusion that the government has provided evidence showing that the Army Reserve-Recruiting Assistance Program was “directly connected with or related to “either the Authorization

for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 or the Authorization for Use of Military Force passed in response to the Sept. 11 attacks,” Berzon said.

On May 26, 2016, a federal jury unanimously found Jucutan guilty of four counts of wire fraud and four counts of aggravated identity theft, in connection with a scheme to defraud the AR-RAP.

Munson sentenced Jucutan to two years and four months in prison.

Jucutan, through counsel David Baner, appealed to the Ninth Circuit.

Jucutan moved for his con-

tinued release pending his appeal. Manglona granted the motion. The U.S. government did not oppose Jucutan's motion for release.

In affirming Munson's ruling, Ninth Circuit judges Wardlaw and Bennett said the U.S. government demonstrated that the offenses charged were “committed in connection with the...performance...of any contract, subcontract, or purchase order which is...directly connected with or related to the authorized use of the Armed Forces,” satisfying the third prong of the Wartime Suspension of Limitations Act's of-

fense clause.

Wardlaw and Bennett said Munson correctly found that Document and Packaging Broker Inc., or Docupak, contracted with the Army Reserve to administer its recruiting assistance program, AR-RAP.

Wardlaw and Bennett said the Army Reserve used task orders to request funding for AR-RAP from the National Guard's “umbrella contract” with Docupak.

Docupak invoiced the Army Reserve for reimbursement pursuant to those task orders.

The judges said the government also demonstrated that the AR-RAP was “directly connected with or related to “the United States' use of the

Armed Forces pursuant to either the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 or the Authorization for Use of Military Force.

Through AR-RAP, the judges said, the Army Reserve hired more personnel to meet their “end-strength” goals as the global war on terror drew reservists into active operations.

Thus, the judges said, Munson correctly concluded that AR-RAP had a direct connection with or relationship to the use of the Armed Forces pursuant to the AUMF or the AUMFAI to combat international terrorism. (Ferdie de la Torre)



COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

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E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Monday, December 17, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom located at the Airport Fire Station, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on the island of Saipan. The following items are the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes (November 27, 2018)

II. BOARD ORGANIZATION

1. Election of Officers
2. Appointment of Standing Committee Chairpersons

III. PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

IV. CORRESPONDENCES

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Financial Affairs Committee
2. Airport Facilities Committee
3. Seaport Facilities Committee
4. Personnel Affairs Committee

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

VII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Terminal Tariff Regulations (Modular Units) – Final Adoption

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Supplements Budget Request:
 - a. Saipan International Airport A/C Replacement Project – Change Order & Supplement Request
 - b. Operations Paint Machine
2. Equipment Policy and Procedures
3. Skymark Airlines Office Lease
4. Tandem Skydive Lease Extension
5. Future Governor's Directives – Regulation and Resolution
6. Standard Operating Procedures – Credit Card
7. CPA Board Resolution
 - a. Charles H. Ada II
 - b. Skymark Airlines Inc.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

X. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

XI. ADJOURNMENT

All interest persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. A time limit may be imposed for oral statements.

/s/ THOMAS P. VILLAGOMEZ
Acting Chairman, Board of Directors

December 11, 2018



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CUC-RFP-19-002

LEASE OF OFFICE SPACE FOR CUC ROTA ADMINISTRATION & OPERATION

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from individuals or firms for the lease of office space for CUC Administration and Operation, Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The proposed office space must conform to American Disabilities Act (ADA), OSHA and CNMI Zoning regulation.

The RFP package may be obtained at the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section (Saipan, Tinian or Rota), by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$20.00 for one RFP package set. The RFP package will be provided in a CD or emailed to the registered Proponents email ID. Prospective Proposers for this RFP must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division to be considered.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked “CUC-RFP-19-002, Lease of Office Space for CUC Rota Administration & Operation” to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on January 7, 2019. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services.

Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 21, 2018** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christie Sablan, Senior Purchasing Assistant via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Push ceremony kicks off Operation Christmas Drop

By ALANA CHARGUALAF
JOINT REGION MARIANAS

ASAN, Guam—Service members and civilians gathered to witness the ceremonial pushing of a box filled with humanitarian goods into a C-130 during the Operation Christmas Drop push ceremony at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam last Dec. 10.

The airborne holiday bounty is bound for far-flung islands across Micronesia.

Brig. Gen. Gentry Boswell, commander, 36th Wing, AAFB; Col. Otis Jones, commander, 374th Airlift Wing, Yokota Air Base, Japan; Maj. Gen. John Gordy, commander, U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center; Heather Coble, deputy chief of mission, Kolonia, Pohnpei and Federated States of Micronesia; and Bruce Best, researcher, University of Guam, joined together to push the first box of goods into a C-130 that will deliver to the CNMI, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau.

Boswell emphasized the satisfaction that comes with



generous service and gave well wishes that the operation continues through the years.

"It is only fitting that, in this season, at this time, we pause and reach out. The reward for our efforts is simple, but yet, again, profound. It's the satisfaction to help our fellow man," Boswell said. "I'm honored to represent the men and women of 36th Wing, our airmen, our families, our community and the people of this island as we recognize the im-

portance of Operation Christmas Drop and the purpose of what we are doing today."

"There will always be challenges that will prove to distract us and try to bring us away from efforts such as this," he added. "As I pray for safe skies, safe flights and good drops for all of our crews, I will also pray that, in our hearts, we will always have the zeal and commitment to make sure that this operation continues for many, many

Thomas Krise, president, University of Guam, third from left, and his wife, far left, engage in conversation during the Operation Christmas Drop Push Ceremony at Andersen Air Force Base Dec. 10. During the ceremony, the first of nearly 100 boxes of humanitarian goods was pushed into the C-130 before being delivered to 56 islands across the CNMI, the FSM, and Palau.

U.S. NAVY/ALANA CHARGUALAF

to deliver to approximately 30,000 islanders.

Coble acknowledged the many months of hard work that dozens of service members, organizers, and volunteers have devoted to ensuring the success of such a long-standing tradition, also highlighting the sense of community that is so important during the holiday season.

She expressed the sincere

gratitude of the island people.

"Believe me. The people of the Federated States of Micronesia very much appreciate your time and effort," Coble said. "This is something they look forward to every year. Everything that you send down there is really put to good use."

Operation Christmas Drop began 66 years ago and is the U.S. Department of Defense's longest-running humanitarian airlift operation.

During the holiday season of 1952, a B-29 Superfortress aircrew noticed islanders waving at them from the island of Kapingamarangi, inspiring the aircrew to drop a bundle of supplies attached to a parachute to the islanders below.

Service members with the Royal Australian Air Force and Japan Air Self-Defense Force are also partners in the effort.



A member of the Philippines Air Force ties a knot to secure a T-10 parachute onto a Low-Cost, Low-Altitude bundle during bundle building day at Operation Christmas Drop 2018 at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam last Dec. 8, 2018. In continuing to train with its allies, the U.S. Air Force and its partners deter aggression, increase shared operational capacity, and maintain peace and stability in the Indo-Asia Pacific region.

U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN MATTHEW GILMORE

By MATTHEW GILMORE
374TH AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Servicemembers from the U.S. Air Force, Japan Air-Self Defense Force (Koku Jietai), Royal Australian Air Force, and volunteers from the local community gathered together for a day of bundle building during Operation Christmas Drop 2018 at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam last Dec. 8, 2018.

While the event saw 143 bundles packed to the brim with food, clothing and medical supplies set to be airdropped to 56 Micronesian islands throughout the Pacific, the bundle build itself started a few days prior with the building of the actual bundles.

"The second we got here we started cutting the wood that would become the tops and bottoms of the 143 bundles or Coastal Humanitarian Air Drop we packed here today,"

said airman 1st Class Brian Story, 374th Logistics Readiness Squadron Combat Mobility Flight operations technician. "Even though it's been hard work, every bundle we've made has been worth it. I joined the Air Force to help people and being here at OCD really makes me feel like I am doing just that."

That drive to help people was a shared driving force between everyone who volunteered their time to come be a part of the 67th OCD bundle build. From servicemembers to volunteers, old to young, it was all about making a difference.

"We came to help other people," said Andrew Smith, a cub scout with the local Pack 23 out of the nearby Naval Base Guam.

Andrew, his mother Krystle Smith, and the rest of Pack 23 would go on to help fill 10 of those 143 bundles set to be air-

dropped to the CNMI, Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau.

For the airmen of the 374 LRS CMF, it is the island of Tinian within the CNMI that has even more meaning for them when it comes to being a part of OCD.

"One of our fellow airmen in our shop is originally from Tinian," said airman Briar Morris, 374 LRS CMF operations technician. "The fact that what we've built is going to go out and provide help to where he is from is really special. It's really is such an amazing opportunity to be a part of this humanitarian training mission."

"Knowing full well that not only are we dropping bundles to help people now, but that this training could help us and our partners be better prepared for other humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts down the road, makes all of our hard work here worth it."



Senior airman Kylie Hanni, left, and airman first class Jaime Suarez, right, both 36th Airlift Squadron loadmasters out of Yokota Air Base, Japan, verify their drop zone over the island of Nama, Federated States of Micronesia, during Operation Christmas Drop last Dec. 10, 2018.

U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN MATTHEW GILMORE

US Indo-Pacific Forces participate in Christmas Drop

By MATTHEW GILMORE
374TH AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Santa 21 returned to the "north pole" of Andersen Air Force Base, Guam after delivering three bundles to the island of Nama in the Federated States of Micronesia on Dec. 10.

Among the helpers on board was none other than the commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, Adm. Phil Davidson.

In its 67th year, Operation Christmas Drop will go on to provide 25 tons of critical supplies to 20,000 people throughout the CNMI, FSM,

and Palau, serving as the world's longest running airdrop training mission.

"Today we dropped food, tools, and toys on just one of the 56 islands that will receive humanitarian bundles over the next few days," said Davidson. "Having the opportunity to see our aircrews make that airdrop really reminded me how much of a great privilege it is for not only the Indo-Pacific Command perspective, but also the Pacific Air Forces command perspective to have been doing this mission for 67 years."

In addition to the U.S. Air

Force, the Japan Air-Self Defense Force (Koku Jietai), and the Royal Australian Air Force also participated in the effort to better prepare to respond to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief situations in the region by dropping Coastal Humanitarian Air Drops, thus increasing interoperability.

"The importance of the JASDF and RAAF as our allies cannot be understated," said Davidson. "By working together on things like OCD, it really goes to show the mutual concern we each have for security in the Pacific."

Construction contract signed for UOG engineering building

The University of Guam signed a contract with Bascon Corp. on Nov. 29 for the construction of the School of Engineering building. Standing, from left: Anita Borja Enriquez, senior vice president of UOG; Shahram Khosrowpanah, dean of the School of Engineering; David Hurchanik, architect with David Hurchanik Architect LLC; Melanie Mendiola, executive director of the UOG Endowment Foundation; and Joseph M. Diego, area director – rural development for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Seated, from left, Elaine Jones, board member of the UOG Endowment Foundation; Christopher K. Felix, chairperson of the UOG Board of Regents; Thomas W. Krise, president of UOG; Eduardo Suarez, president of Bascon Corp.; and Wilfred P. Leon Guerrero, chairman of the UOG Endowment Foundation.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM



The University of Guam signed a \$5.4 million contract with Bascon Corp. on Nov. 29 to begin construction on the UOG School of Engineering building.

Construction is set to begin in February with project completion expected in one year. The building will be located in front of the Agriculture & Life Sciences Building.

“This is momentous—certainly for the University of Guam, but for all of Guam and all of Micronesia,” said UOG president Thomas W. Krise. “Our students will be enabling the development of an area of three million square miles and half a million people. We’re so pleased with this partnership of multiple entities.”

The building design was completed by David Hurchanik Architect LLC, and the

construction will be completed by Bascon Corp. The UOG Endowment Foundation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are providing the loan.

The 16,000-square-foot building will provide dedicated space for three classrooms, three laboratories—one each for hydraulics, soil and structure, and environmental engineering—a computer lab, and faculty office space.



Architectural rendering provided by David Hurchanik Architect LLC.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

BOH Gualo Rai resuming normal schedule

Bank of Hawaii's Gualo Rai Branch on Saipan will resume normal operating hours following Typhoon Yutu, beginning Monday, Dec. 17.

Normal branch hours: Monday through Thursday (9am to 4pm); Fridays (9am to 6pm); Saturdays (9am to 1pm); Sundays (closed).

Bank of Hawaii ATMs on Saipan are now fully operational. (PR)

Kagman PTSA meeting set

The Kagman cluster of schools will be having a PTSA meeting on Dec. 18, 2018, at 5:30pm in the Kagman Elementary School cafeteria. All parents and guardians are encouraged to attend this meeting. Call the school at 237-3921, 664-4100, or 664-3911 if you have any questions or concerns. (PR)

Military training at FDM, Warning Area 12, Warning Area 517

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct training in the island of Farallon de Medinilla, Warning Area 12, and Warning Area 517 on Dec. 12 and 13, from 10am to 3pm. Training will also be conducted at W-517 on Dec. 14-15, from 9am to 2pm.

It is recommended the public, especially fishermen and marine tour operators, monitor

the Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories.

The general location of the training in Farallon de Medinilla will be in a 12-nautical mile radius of the island.

W-12 begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters.

W-517 begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. The Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Banks are open for public use.

These types of trainings are designed to enhance the readiness of military personnel. Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the training. (PR)

Guam CHamoru commission meeting set

The Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru yan i Fina'ná'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Taotao Tāno' (Commission on CHamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam) will hold its December monthly meeting on Dec. 13, Thursday, from 12:30pm to 3pm. The meeting will take place at the Garden House (former Guam Museum) in the Plaza de Espana, Hagåtña. For more information, contact Kumisión chair/Gé'helo' Hope Alvarez Cristobal at 483-0097 or secretary/Sikritária Rosa Salas Palomo at 727-5522. (PR)

Pamintuan to represent GMS anew at Scripps Spelling Bee

For four years in a row, eighth-grader Christian Ted Pamintuan remains the undefeated champion of Green Meadow School's Scripps Spelling Bee after knocking down 23 contestants from first grade to eighth grade.

The school's spelling bee championship was held on Nov. 29 at the GMS Chalan Kiya campus.

Touted as the toughest spelling bee in the history of GMS,

the competition started with 24 students in the first round. The number was eventually reduced to six students in the 11th round. The six remained in the competition until the 29th round, when all the Scripps Spelling Words had been exhausted. New sets of spelling words had to be taken from other resources for the next rounds until a champion emerged.

On the 31st round, the Top 3

spellers were left vying for school champion title and to be the school's representative to 2019 Scripps Regional Spelling Bee in Guam. These students were Cloe Ferlyn Lagmay, Areeza Gaile Anda, and Pamintuan. They lasted until the 37th round, when Lagmay misspelled the word “palate” and spelled the word palette instead.

On the 44th round, Anda, a seventh grader, misspelled the

word “treachery.” She later said that she hastily spelled it without thinking first.

Pamintuan secured the slot on the 45th round by correctly spelling the word “dubious.”

Pamintuan became the official school champion after four hours of tough competition. Both Pamintuan and Anda will attend the 2019 Regional Scripps Spelling Bee in March 2019.

The judges who served during the School Scripps Spelling Bee were Tina Uchel, Rosalie Habijan, and Virgie Ogerio with the support of school principal Milagros Songcuan. (PR)



Christian Ted Pamintuan remains the undefeated champion of Green Meadow School's Scripps Spelling Bee, held on Nov. 29 at the GMS Chalan Kiya campus.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT



Happy birthday to my amazing tata, Audie! May the year ahead be filled with every good thing life has to offer. God bless. Greetings come from Serenity.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Opinion

Hafa Adair

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

The impeachment rabbit hole

The impeachment rumbles were audible even before the latest filing by federal prosecutors, and the volume has gotten much higher since. When Michael Cohen entered a plea that said he committed a campaign finance felony “at the direction of” Donald Trump, it became clear that the president is in greater jeopardy than ever.

Over the weekend, U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., said, “This criminal must be brought up by the Congress of the United States for impeachment.” Rep.-elect Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., a voice of progressives, was asked earlier if that step would be premature and replied, “Not to me.”

Nancy Pelosi and other House leaders are not so sure. But a November Politico/Morning Consult poll found that 61 percent of Democratic voters want to see impeachment proceedings commence. Billionaire activist Tom Steyer, who is contemplating a presidential run, has put together an organization called Need to Impeach.

The case for impeachment has become more plausible. In arranging payments to Stormy Daniels and Karen McDougal to keep them from revealing purported affairs with Trump, prosecutors argued, Cohen “deceived the voting public by hiding alleged facts that he believed would have had a substantial effect on the election.”

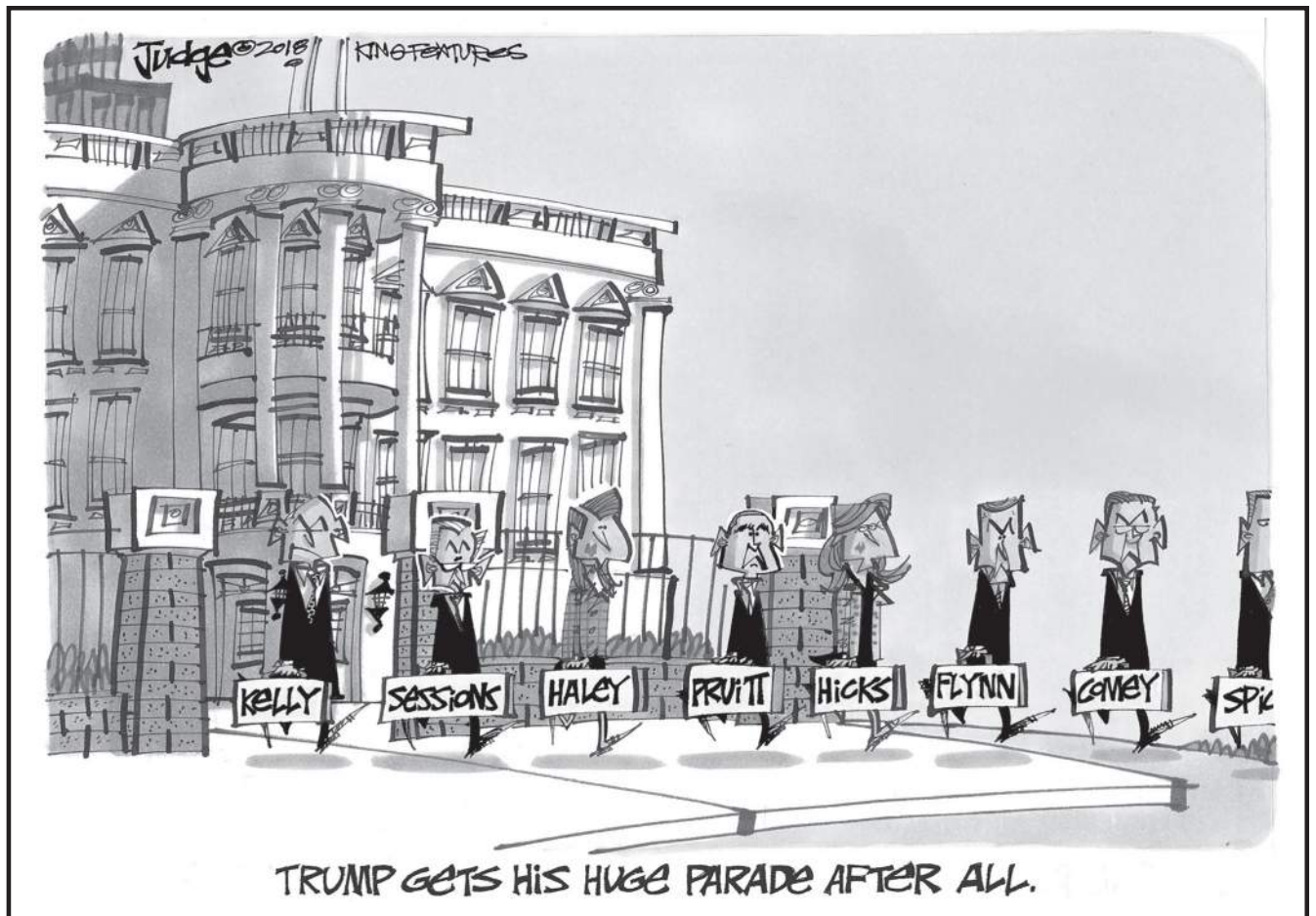
If the claims that Trump ordered the hush payments are true, he is evidently guilty of a campaign finance crime. But long-standing Justice Department policy is that a sitting president is “constitutionally immune from indictment and criminal prosecution.” After he leaves office, a president may face criminal charges. But for the time being, the only remedy for presidential crimes is in the hands of Congress.

The saga of Trump’s misdeeds, real or imagined, has been lurid and riveting, and like impatient readers plowing through a murder mystery, many Americans are tempted to jump to conclusions about the ending. It may seem that with all the smoke around the Oval Office, this presidency is bound to go down in flames. But that’s far from certain.

Republicans assumed they had the goods on Bill Clinton after a special prosecutor found he lied under oath and obstructed justice to conceal his affair with a White House intern. But the public wasn’t persuaded that this wrongdoing justified removal. When the House voted for Clinton’s impeachment in 1998, 63 percent of Americans opposed it.

So did this page. “Clinton lied to avoid deep personal embarrassment, not to seize, maintain or subvert the power of the state,” we noted, in words that could be applied to the current controversy. Impeachment, we said, “is a constitutional sword meant to be unsheathed only in the gravest, most unusual circumstances and to be wielded only to preserve the security and integrity of the republic.”

The Senate acquitted Clinton; he rose in popularity; and Republicans suffered politically. In many ways, it was a surprising outcome. And yes, there was no suggestion that Clinton had tried to illicitly influence an election. Still the lesson for today is that Americans of all political hues

See **IMPEACHMENT** on Next Page

Trump just owned the looming government shutdown

When Washington braces for a potential government shutdown, the usual ritual is that Republicans and Democrats will posture over who will get blamed.

President Donald Trump, however, made it clear Tuesday morning that he will be the one shutting down the government if Congress doesn’t provide money for the bigger, more expansive wall he has promised to build along the southern U.S. border.

Meeting with the top House and Senate Democrats, Trump engaged in a surprisingly public airing of differences over the last remaining appropriations bills. Funding for about half of the federal government will run out Dec. 21 unless Congress acts to extend it, but it appears that lawmakers and Trump are at an impasse—he wants \$5 billion to help fund his project, but he may not have enough votes for the wall funding in either chamber.

This isn’t because lawmakers think border security is strong enough already. It’s because many of them don’t think a bigger wall is the right way to shore up the southern border.

Anyway, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and House Minority Leader (and soon to be Speaker) Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) took pains while the media were present to pin the blame for any shutdown on Trump. In fact, they called it the “Trump shutdown.”

Trump initially sought to blame Senate Democrats for the hold-up, but Pelosi argued that Trump doesn’t have enough support from House Republicans to get the wall funded. (The House Appropriations Committee included \$5 billion for the wall in their version of the fiscal 2019 spending bill for the Department of Homeland Security, but GOP leaders never brought the bill to the House floor, suggesting they don’t have enough Republican votes to pass it.) So eventually Trump declared, “You know what I’ll say? ‘Yes, if we don’t get what we want one way or the other, whether it’s through you, through military, through anything you want to call, I will shut down the government.’”

Just to make sure the point was not too fine, he added, “And I am proud to shut down the government for border security, Chuck, because the people of this country don’t want criminals and people that have lots of problems and drugs pouring into our country. So I will take the mantle. I will be the one the shut it down. I’m not going to blame you for it.”

Well, that settles that! Except that it doesn’t. Trump is betting that the public will fear migrants more than it will care about some federal agencies going temporarily dark. So he’s calculating that the blame game won’t matter so much this time.

Here’s how Press Secretary Sarah Sanders put it:

“President Trump made clear that any government funding

By **JON HEALEY**
Los Angeles Times



measure must include responsible border security, including a wall, to protect the American people from drugs, crime, terrorism, public health threats, and the severe straining of the social safety net. Illegal immigration is deeply unfair to American workers, wage-earners, and taxpayers—costing billions of dollars and thousands of innocent lives.

“So far, the Democrat Party has made clear they would rather keep the border open than the government open. President Trump was grateful for the opportunity to let the press into the meeting so that the American People can see firsthand that while Republicans are fighting to protect our border, Democrats are fighting to protect illegal immigrants. This Administration will always put Americans first.”

Just to be clear here, just about everything Sanders said about what the wall would protect against is not supported by evidence or experience. Just to take one—people in the country illegally aren’t eligible for any of the federal safety net programs, so it’s hard to see how they could be severely straining it. Yes, California has chosen to spend its own tax dollars extending Medicaid to some non-citizens, but only to children, whose healthcare costs are relatively low.

Beyond that, a wall doesn’t “protect” anyone against people who overstay their visas, who represent a growing proportion of the undocumented population. In fact, according to the Department of Homeland Security, almost twice as many people overstayed their visas as crossed the border illegally.

Regardless, Trump’s tactic is typically bold and risky. In previous shutdowns—this year, during President Obama’s second term and President Clinton’s first term—big, important issues were on the table: relief for “Dreamers,” the fate of Obamacare and funding for major federal benefit programs, respectively. And in each case, polls showed that the public objected to the shutdown regardless of the issues at play. People want a functional government. They don’t want agencies held hostage to a policy agenda, especially not one that’s contentious.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Why US universities are good

Author's Note: This was originally published on April 10, 2016. I believe it is worth a second look, and it appears here with only a few modest updates.

American universities are the best in the world. This is widely recognized by experts in higher education from every nation. Fifteen of the world's top 20 universities worldwide are in the United States. Assessment and ranking systems in the U.S., the U.K., China, India and Japan confirm this standing led by the Times Higher Education of London, global authorities on the subject.

There is rising disquiet regarding America's ability to remain preeminent. A 2014 New York Times Upshot analysis provides a voice of consternation. Nevertheless, here is what makes U.S. higher education the envy of the world.

One: Strong universities expose students to intellectually broadening core curricula (Columbia led the way), coupled with training in specific disciplines through applied skill sets. This one-two punch has been the might of American higher education since the industrial revolution, the development of the land grant university idea and Charles Eliot's introduction of professional programs at Harvard. All occurred in the latter part of the 19th century. This integration of reflective thinking and doing makes our nations institutions great.

Two: U.S. universities have traditionally held to the concept of mission differentiation. Major research universities have recognized and rewarded research as well as teaching excellence. In regional and comprehensive institutions, teaching comes to the fore with scholarship recognized but in service to teaching. Clark Kerr, former president of the University of California, cemented this idea into state policy through the 1960 A Master Plan for Higher Education in California. Different missions define free choice, roles and expectations for faculty, students and families. Focus allows attainment of mission.

Three: Academic freedom, a concept woven into the muscle of America through constitutionally-protected speech and rugged individualism, remains the international high watermark, made possible by a republican form of government. When ideas based on creative activity, research and scholarship follow from investigation, dogmatism falls off the table.

Four: U.S. universities exist in a highly competitive three-party environment. Public, private not-for-profit and private for-profit universities all share the market. Many believe the for-profit sector is new to the landscape of American higher education, but their genesis as business schools dates to the mid-nineteenth century. A form of educational Darwinism ensued. Separating grain from chaff is essential, time consuming and messy, but the unfettered market place always prevails.

Five: Only religious organizations benefit from American philanthropy more than universities. The causes for this are

IMPEACHMENT

From Page 10

should keep their heads and wait for all the facts to emerge before reaching a judgment.

It may be that the revelations will vindicate Democrats who regard Trump as thoroughly corrupt and dangerous. It may be that what Cohen claims is the most serious credible accusation against Trump — and that it may never be proven. Does Cohen have evidence more convincing than his recollections that Trump was his puppeteer?

If there is strong, abundant evidence that Trump has committed "high crimes" of the sort feared by the Framers, it will come out in due time. If special counsel Robert Mueller and other federal prosecutors are unable to confirm serious wrongdoing that warrant upending the result of the 2016 election, likewise. At that point, Americans can reach fully informed judgments about whether Trump should be impeached and removed from office, or subject to federal prosecution, or both, or neither.

Those who think they already know the truth are only guessing. The investigations are not yet complete. And if Americans have learned anything from the past three years, it's this: The future can always surprise.

(c)2018 Chicago Tribune

manifold, but the effect is that universities have become excellent because of philanthropy. Generosity ceases when quality falters. Philanthropy is both barometer and instigator of excellence. Conversely, state support will continue long after effectiveness wanes.

Six: The U.S. model for university management and leadership has historically respected students and their aspirations. Some Chinese universities are struggling to unshackle universities from overly authoritative frameworks that undervalue individual initiative and creativity. The power of respecting student aspirations—not as customers but as learners—is the gold standard.

Seven: American universities attract internationally excellent scholars. The strength of our universities may be a factor, but the overarching concept of a free society, and the egalitarian nature of individuals succeeding based on merit rather than genealogy, politics or national doctrine, is the magnet.

Eight: Pragmatism in U.S. higher education often calls for faculty and students to address real problems. Paul Simon, former Illinois Senator and presidential candidate, told me he viewed the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute as a "do" tank rather than a "think" tank. This articulates a pervasive strength of U.S. higher education—innovation gives birth to public benefit through action.

Nine: U.S. universities, until the time of the Morrill Act of 1862, were typically isolated from political interference and conceived as sectarian. Beginning in the nineteenth century, boards

By **WALTER V. WENDLER**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Walter V. Wendler is president of West Texas A&M University. His reflections are available at www.walterwendler.com.

at Michigan and Berkeley discontinued church appointments. The transformation evolved and public universities are secular, eschewing any form of religious influence. Trading church influence for challenging and oftentimes coercive political forces, and the Orwellian idea of governmental order as righteous objectivity, has proven risky. Thoughtful free expression, not political correctness in any form, must rule.

Ten: Considerations beyond standardized test scores and high school GPAs, the rule in many nations, are common in admissions processes at many U. S. institutions. Holistic admissions, when properly managed and guided by faculty insight, provides wisdom that enlivens the numb simplicity of easily measurable aspects of student performance.

These 10 characteristics help define U.S. higher education. The price of not attending to their animating force will undermine universities and the mantle of U.S. leadership.

Want to stop illegal immigration? Allow more legal immigrants

By **MICHAEL COON and ABIGAIL R. HALL**
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

President Donald Trump's insistence on tighter immigration policies could reach an apex by Dec. 21, when a partial government shutdown looms without a new funding bill. Trump, no fan of immigrant "caravans" heading our way through Mexico, is pushing to include \$5 billion for his long sought-after border wall.

Oddly enough, to stop illegal immigration we need more—not less—immigration (of the legal variety).

Trump's solution resonates with many Americans who believe entering the country illegally makes one a criminal by nature and likely to commit future crimes, or that disregard for U.S. border policy undermines law and order in America. The president himself has referred to these immigrants as drug dealers, rapists, and gang members.

And indeed, most Americans would never sneak into another country, right? Probably not.

But why? Is it out of respect for other countries' laws and borders? Surely that's true, but no. Most Americans would simply never need to. Anyone who holds a U.S. passport can legally enter 186 countries around the world—many without a visa and essentially no questions asked. By contrast, the United States only extends this courtesy to 40 countries, primarily to European and high-income countries.

The easiest way to stop illegal immigration into the United States—and even address related border security and public safety issues—would be extending this benefit to more countries. The vast majority of individuals crossing the southern border pose no threat to public safety. Recent research by the Cato Institute showed that fewer than 1 percent of Texas' undocumented population had criminal convictions, consistent with earlier nationwide research. The only crime most undocumented immigrants will ever commit is crossing the border, which they only do because there is no legal alternative. Allowing them through legal ports of entry would prevent them from breaking the law and also allow officials to screen and record their identities.

Since 1990 the budget for the Border Patrol has increased tenfold with no real impact on illegal border crossings and apprehensions. Apprehensions were largely unchanged between 1990 and 2007, yet the undocumented population grew. Both

declined after 2008, though this was largely due to economic factors, not enforcement.

There is one discernable impact of increased enforcement: higher costs associated with crossing the border. Smugglers charge higher prices to get people over the border, and those crossing face higher risk of injury and death on more dangerous terrain.

Higher smuggling costs make it more appealing for criminals to establish sophisticated smuggling operations. Once across the border, gangs will often hold their clients for additional ransom or traffic them into sex work.

More legal, documentable border crossings would undercut the profitability of smuggling, keeping thousands of people from the mercy of truly violent criminals. It would also remove pressure from the Border Patrol and allow them to more effectively keep America safe. Every hour the Border Patrol spends stopping, transporting, and filing paperwork for economic migrants is an hour they are not out patrolling for dangerous criminals.

It is possible that once legal immigrants enter in the United States, they might not return home. The Department of Homeland Security estimates that in 2016, 1.25 percent of legal entrants (or more than 600,000 people) did not leave when they were supposed to. While this percentage might increase if we allowed more Mexicans and Central Americans to come in legally, history shows that it likely wouldn't increase by much.






Prior to the dramatic increases in border enforcement in recent years, many who came into the United States illegally would only stay for short periods of time to, for example, work seasonal agricultural jobs. However, after the costs and uncertainty of crossing the border increased, more chose not to return home for fear they could not cross again. Somewhat counterintuitively, more legal immigration would actually allow many undocumented immigrants to return to their native countries.

But what if they didn't? Suppose they did decide to stay. Many would ask, "How could we be so foolish and let them in when we knew they would stay?" The real question we should be asking ourselves is, "why were we trying to keep them out in the first place?"

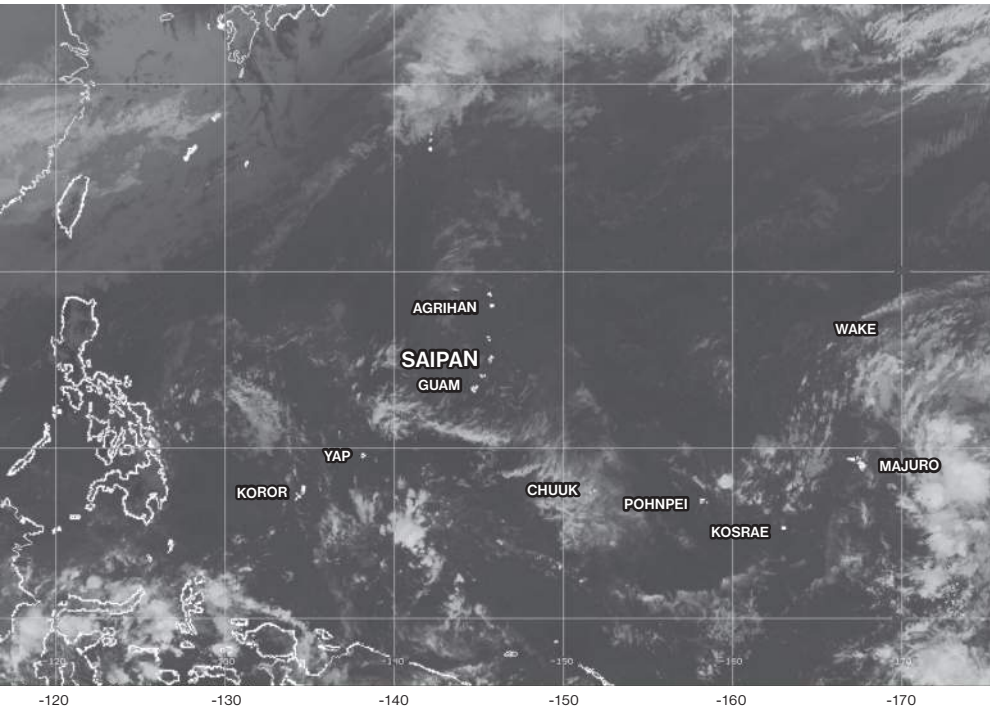
Michael Coon and Abigail R. Hall are assistant professors of economics at the University of Tampa.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
									
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph		Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	
89°	78°	89°	78°	89°	78°	89°	78°	89°	78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:11 AM, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2018
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Models show a dry season weather pattern over the Marianas with only partly cloudy skies and isolated showers expected through the coming weekend. Relative humidity at 700 mb will be less than 70 percent through most of that time which supports the idea of just isolated showers. Expect winds of 10 to 20 mph.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	87° / 79°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°	
Yap	Partly Cloudy	87° / 80°	
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Thunderstorms	70° / 61°	
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	36° / 16°	
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	70° / 63°	
Honolulu	Windy	79° / 71°	
London	Partly Cloudy	39° / 34°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	74° / 50°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88° / 77°	
Melbourne	Rain	72° / 57°	
Miami	Cloudy	77° / 73°	
New York	Partly Cloudy	41° / 37°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	48° / 39°	
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	37° / 27°	
Busan	Sunny	45° / 28°	
Rome	Showers	54° / 46°	
Salem	Cloudy	58° / 50°	
San Francisco	Sunny	58° / 46°	
Seoul	Sunny	32° / 12°	
Tokyo	Sunny	50° / 36°	
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	45° / 36°	



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
5:17 AM	LOW TIDE	0.00	
12:35 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.81	
6:40 PM	LOW TIDE	1.18	
10:35 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.47	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:33 AM	5:48 PM
Friday	6:34 AM	5:48 PM
Saturday	6:34 AM	5:48 PM
Sunday	6:35 AM	5:49 PM
Monday	6:35 AM	5:49 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	10:57 AM	10:44 PM	-
Friday	11:37 AM	11:32 PM	-
Saturday	12:16 AM	-	-
Sunday	-	12:20 AM	12:54 PM
Monday	-	1:09 AM	1:32 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 20, 2018

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA105	4:45pm	5:25pm	2, 4	UA104	3:00pm	3:41pm	2, 4
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) – temporarily suspended				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN – temporarily suspended			
7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:00am+1	1
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
<i>Temporarily suspended:</i>				<i>Temporarily suspended:</i>			
TW9308	1:10am	4:10am	3, 4	TW9307	6:30pm	12:10am+1	2, 3
TW308	1:35am	5:20am	Daily	TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ626	2:20am	6:00am	1	TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
TW9308	3:20am	6:30am	2	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
TW9308	3:25am	6:30am	5	TW9307	9:00pm	2:20am+1	1
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily	TW9307	9:05pm	2:25am+1	4
				7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)				HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN			
JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1	JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4	JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)				GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6	3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK) – resume from Nov 27				BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7	MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:15am	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM	UA182/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	UA192/174	10:30pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:50pm	2, 4 via GUM	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4	HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7	UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UA117/159	9:15am	11:00pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM	UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
				UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA				1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
FLIGHT # DEPARTURE ARRIVAL FREQUENCY				1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily	1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily	1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily	1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
FLIGHT # DEPARTURE ARRIVAL FREQUENCY				1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily	1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily	1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily	1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT # DEPARTURE ARRIVAL FREQUENCY				FLIGHT # DEPARTURE ARRIVAL FREQUENCY			
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily	2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT # DEPARTURE ARRIVAL FREQUENCY				2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily	2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT # DEPARTURE ARRIVAL FREQUENCY				2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily	2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
				2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
				2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
				2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
				2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily



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Business

Huawei CFO gets bail; China detains ex-Canadian diplomat

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP)—A Canadian court granted bail on Tuesday to a top Chinese executive arrested at the United States’ request in a case that has set off a diplomatic furor among the three countries and complicated high-stakes U.S.-China trade talks.

Hours before the bail hearing in Vancouver, China detained a former Canadian diplomat in Beijing in apparent retaliation for the Dec. 1 arrest of Meng Wanzhou, chief financial officer of Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei and daughter of the company’s founder.

After three days of hearings, a British Columbia justice granted bail of \$10 million Canadian (US\$7.5 million) to Meng, but required her to wear an ankle bracelet, surrender her passports, stay in Vancouver and its suburbs and confine herself to one of her two Vancouver homes from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

The decision was met with applause in the packed courtroom, where members of Vancouver’s Chinese community had turned out to show support for Meng.

Amid rising tension between China and Canada, Canadian Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale confirmed Tuesday that a former Canadian diplomat had been detained in Beijing. The detention came after



AP
In this courtroom sketch, Meng Wanzhou, right, the chief financial officer of Huawei Technologies, listens to the judge during a bail hearing at B.C. Supreme Court in Vancouver, British Columbia, on Tuesday, Dec. 11, 2018. Wanzhou has been granted bail for \$10 million by a B.C. Supreme Court judge, \$7.5 million of which must be cash. Wanzhou is wanted by the United States on allegations that the company violated trade sanctions against Iran.

“It is clear from the filings that were unsealed in Canada, Meng and others are alleged to have put financial institutions at risk of criminal and civil liability in the United States by deceiving those institutions as to the nature and extent of Huawei’s business in Iran,” Palladino said.

Meng has denied the U.S. allegations through her lawyer in court, promising to fight them if she is extradited to face charges in the United States.

“We have every confidence that the Canadian and U.S. legal systems will reach a just conclusion in the following proceedings,” Huawei said in a statement.

“As we have stressed all along, Huawei complies with all applicable laws and regulations in the countries and regions where we operate, including export control and sanction laws of the UN, US, and EU. We look forward to a timely resolution to this matter.”

shell company to sell equipment to Iran in violation of U.S. sanctions. It says Meng and Huawei misled banks about the company’s business dealings in Iran.

On Tuesday, U.S. State Department spokesman Robert Palladino told reporters in Washington “the charges against Meng pertain to alleged lies to United States financial institutions” about Huawei’s business dealings in Iran.

China warned Canada of consequences for Meng’s arrest.

“We’re deeply concerned,” Goodale said. “A Canadian is obviously in difficulty in China. ... We are sparing no effort to do everything we possibly can to look after his safety.”

Michael Kovrig, who previously worked as a diplomat in Beijing, Hong Kong and the United Nations, was taken into custody Monday night during one of his regular visits to Beijing, according to a spokesman for International Crisis Group, where Kovrig

now works as North East Asia adviser based in Hong Kong.

Canada had been bracing for retaliation for Meng’s arrest. The Canadian province of British Columbia canceled a trade mission to China amid fears China could detain Canadians to put pressure on Ottawa over Meng’s detention.

“In China there is no coincidence,” Guy Saint-Jacques, a former Canadian ambassador to China, said of Kovrig’s detention. “Unfortunately Canada is caught in the middle of this dispute between

the U.S and China. Because China cannot kick the U.S. they turn to the next target.”

Earlier in the day, China vowed to “spare no effort” to protect against “any bullying that infringes the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese citizens.”

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi didn’t mention Meng by name. But ministry spokesman Lu Kang said Wang was referring to cases of all Chinese abroad, including Meng’s.

Washington accuses Huawei of using a Hong Kong

Christmas tree farmers aim to boost sales via social media

TUALATIN, Ore. (AP)—Rosa Villarreal’s three young sons jumped and ran around the field of Christmas trees like jackrabbits, their excitement palpable as they raced from evergreen to evergreen. The boys, ages 2, 4 and 6, were picking out a real tree this year—a new tradition their young parents hope will create lasting memories.

“I saw this video where the big tree, the mom decorates it, and the little tree, the kids get to decorate it,” she said, as her husband, Jason Jimenez, snapped a photo of their toddler posing with a tiny tree just his size.

Christmas tree farmers across the U.S. worry families like Villarreal’s are slowly dwindling. Artificial trees, once crude imitations of an evergreen, are now so realis-

tic that it’s hard to tell they are fakes even though many are conveniently pre-strung with lights and can fold up for storage at the push of a button.

Between 75 and 80 percent of Americans who have a Christmas tree now have an artificial one, and the \$1 billion market for fake trees is growing at about 4 percent a year—even though they can be reused again and again.

To combat this trend, Christmas tree farmers have joined forces as the Christmas Tree Promotion Board and are running a social media ad campaign this holiday season to tout the benefits of a real evergreen. The campaign, called “It’s Christmas. Keep It Real!,” is funded by a 15-cent fee that tree farmers pay for each tree they harvest.

Christmas tree farmers have

banded together for a social media campaign touting the benefits of real trees this season as concern grows about people choosing artificial trees over natural evergreens (Dec. 11)

It’s a modern-day attempt at such famous agricultural ad campaigns as “Got Milk?” and “Beef. It’s What’s For Dinner.”

A series of short movies on Instagram and Facebook follow real families as they hunt for the perfect tree, cut it down and decorate it. The target audience is the “millennial mom” because tree farmers are increasingly worried that young adults starting their own family traditions will opt for an artificial tree, costing farmers a generation of customers, said Marsha Gray, executive director of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board, based

in Michigan.

“The target we’re talking about right now is millennials: first house, first baby. That’s kind of the decision-making time,” she said, adding that the videos show families cutting their own trees and buying pre-cut trees from lots.

“We realize they may have never done this before. And we need to help them discover it and figure out how to include it in their holiday.”

It’s impossible to know exactly how many real Christmas trees are sold each year because there is no central clearinghouse or agency collecting that information. But the National Christmas Tree Association estimates about 25 million evergreens are harvested each year—and presumably, most of those are sold.

Malaysian ex-PM slapped with new charge over 1MDB scandal

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Former Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak was charged Wednesday with tampering with the final audit report into a defunct state investment fund, adding to a long list of corruption allegations against him since his ouster in May elections.

Najib was charged along with Arul Kanda Kandasamy, the former head of the 1MDB fund, which is being investigated in the U.S. and other countries for alleged cross-border embezzlement and money laundering.

Najib pleaded not guilty to abusing power to order the modification of the report in February 2016 before it was presented to the Public Accounts Committee, in order to protect himself from disciplinary and legal action. Kandasamy, who was detained overnight by anti-graft officials, pleaded not guilty to abetting Najib.

The charges came after the auditor-general revealed last month that some details had been removed from the 1MDB report. Kandasamy

led 1MDB from 2015 until he was terminated in June. The two men were released on bail, and face up to 20 years in prison if found guilty.

Najib set up 1MDB when he took power in 2009 to promote economic development, but the fund amassed billions in debts. U.S. investigators say Najib’s associates stole and laundered \$4.5 billion from the fund, including some that landed in Najib’s bank account.

Public anger over the scandal led to the defeat of Najib’s long-ruling coalition in May 9 elections and ushered in the first change of power since Malaysia gained independence from Britain in 1957.

The new government reopened the investigations stifled under Najib’s rule. Najib, his wife and several top-ranking former government officials have been charged with multiple counts of corruption, criminal breach of trust and money laundering.

Najib, 65, has accused the new government of political vengeance.

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Australian Dollar	1.3857	Singapore Dollar	1.3736
British Pound	0.7997	Japanese Yen	113.45
Canadian Dollar	1.3375	Malaysian Ringgit	4.1369
Chinese Yuan	6.7633	New Zealand Dollar	1.4522
Euro	0.8830	Philippine Peso	51.6464
		Taiwan Dollar	30.2382
		Thailand Baht	32.7025

Nation

California wildfires cleanup to cost at least \$3 billion

Homes leveled by the Camp Fire line Valley Ridge Drive in Paradise, Calif., on Monday, Dec. 3, 2018. AP

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—State and federal authorities estimated Tuesday that it will cost at least \$3 billion to clear debris from 19,000 homes and businesses destroyed by three California wildfires last month.

The disaster relief officials said the cleanup costs will far surpass the record cleanup expense of \$1.3 billion the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers spent on debris removal in Northern California in 2017.

California Office of Emergency Services Director Mark

Ghilarducci said the state will manage cleanup contracts this time. Hundreds of Northern California homeowners complained contractors last year paid by the ton hauled away too much dirt and damaged unbroken driveways, sidewalks and pipes. The state OES spent millions of dollars repairing that damage.

Ghilarducci said the state OES will hire auditors and monitors to watch over the debris removal in hopes of cutting down on the number of over-eager contractors.

“We learned a great number of things,” last year, Ghilarducci said.

He said the U.S. Corps of Engineers was asked to lead the effort last year because state resources were stretched thin after responding to more than a dozen wildfires. This year, he said state officials can manage the cleanup and costs will be shared among state, federal and local authorities.

He said he expects the cleanup to begin in January and take about a year to complete. State and federal

officials are currently removing hazardous household materials from the damaged properties.

Most of the work will occur in Northern California, where the state’s most destructive wildfire destroyed the city of Paradise.

The death toll from the Camp Fire stood at 86 on Tuesday, after the Butte

County Sheriff’s office said that a Paradise man had died of his burn injuries in a hospital nearly three weeks after the Nov. 8 blaze. The number of people on the unaccounted-for list remains at 3.

Insurance companies estimate the industry will face at least \$10 billion in claims from homeowners and businesses destroyed or damaged

in the latest wildfires.

California Insurance Commissioner said the carriers received \$11.8 billion in claims because of the 2017 wine country fires.

Jones has warned increasing risk from wildfires in California could prompt insurers to raise premiums or decline to sell policies entirely to homes in high-risk areas.

Moment of reckoning looms for ex-Trump lawyer Michael Cohen

NEW YORK (AP)—The moment of reckoning has nearly arrived for Michael Cohen, who finds out Wednesday whether his decision to walk away from President Donald Trump after years of unwavering loyalty will spare him from a harsh prison sentence.

A federal judge in New York is set to decide whether Cohen gets leniency or years in prison for crimes including tax evasion, making illegal hush-money payments to protect Trump during the campaign and lying to Congress about the president’s past business dealings in Russia.

Few observers expect the hearing to go well for the 52-year-old attorney.

For weeks, his legal strategy appeared to revolve around persuading the court that he is a reformed man who abandoned longtime friendships and gave up his livelihood when he decided to break with the president and speak with federal investiga-

tors. That narrative collapsed last week. New York prosecutors urged a judge to sentence Cohen to a substantial prison term, saying he’d failed to fully cooperate and overstated his helpfulness. They’ve asked for only a slight reduction in the 4- to 5-year term he would face under federal sentencing guidelines.

A sentence of hard time would leave Cohen with little to show for his decision to plead guilty, though experts said Wednesday’s hearing might not be the last word on his punishment.

Cohen could have his sentence revisited if he strikes a deal with prosecutors in which he provides additional cooperation within a year of his sentence, said Michael J. Stern, a former federal prosecutor in Detroit and Los Angeles.

“Few things spark a defendant’s renewed interest in cooperating faster than trading in a pair of custom Italian trousers for an off-the-rack or-

ange jump suit,” he said.

Annemarie McAvoy, a former federal prosecutor in Brooklyn, said prosecutors appear to be angry at Cohen for limiting his cooperation.

“It could be a tactic to try to break him like they’ve tried to do with (Paul) Manafort,” McAvoy said, referring to Trump’s former campaign chairman. “It kind of shows they’re putting the screws to him. If they’re not mad at him, he didn’t give them what they wanted.”

Cohen’s transition from Trump’s fixer-in-chief to felon has been head-spinning.

During the campaign, he coordinated payments to buy the silence of two women—former Playboy model Karen McDougal and adult film actress Stormy Daniels—who were thinking of speaking with reporters about alleged sexual encounters with Trump. Cohen once told an interviewer he would “take a bullet” for Trump.

ACROSS THE NATION

Man who killed newlywed during robbery executed in Texas

HUNTSVILLE, Texas (AP)—A Texas inmate was executed Tuesday evening for fatally shooting a newlywed during a robbery more than 25 years ago. Alvin Braziel Jr., 43, received lethal injection at the state penitentiary in Huntsville for the 1993 slaying of 27-year-old Douglas White, who was attacked as he and his wife walked on a jogging trail. Asked by the warden if he had a final statement, Braziel thanks supporters and apologized to the victim’s wife, Lora White. “I would like to apologize ... for her husband dying at my hands,” Braziel said from the death chamber gurney. He also said he loved the White family and a person he named but who was not present, then told the warden he was finished. As the sedative pentobarbital began taking effect, he took a couple of breaths, gasped, then snored loudly three times. The fourth snore was noticeably less pronounced, and then all movement stopped. Braziel was pronounced dead 7:19 p.m., nine minutes after the drug began. Braziel became the 24th inmate put to death this year in the U.S. and the 13th executed in Texas, the nation’s busiest capital punishment state. He will be the last Texas inmate executed this year.

Southern California officials OK Colorado River drought plan

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Southern California’s largest water wholesaler has approved a drought contingency plan that it hopes will help ensure the drought-stressed Colorado River will supply the Southwest for a decade. General

Manager Jeffrey Kightlinger says Tuesday’s approval adds the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California to water agencies in Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming that have approved plans to take less water from key river reservoirs, including lakes Mead and Powell. Arizona, several water agencies and Congress still must approve the reserve plan, which Kightlinger calls a tourniquet that will buy time to deal with predicted shortages. The river provides about 25 percent of the water for Southern California cities and farms. The approval by the MWD board comes ahead of talks about contingency plans this week in Las Vegas.

Florida officer shoots, wounds man during 911 call

COCOA, Fla. (AP)—Authorities say a Florida police officer shot and wounded an unarmed man while responding to a 911 call. A Cocoa police news release says 54-year-old Keith Seal was hospitalized with a gunshot wound to his elbow early Tuesday morning. His injury wasn’t considered life-threatening. Police say Seal had called 911 to express concern that a friend of his might have been kidnapped by her ex-husband. Officer Xzevies Baez responded, and shots were reported in the area a short time later. Police haven’t released many details about the shooting. Chief Mike Cantaloupe says it appears Seal made some sort of aggressive act toward the officer. State law enforcement officials are investigating. No charges were immediately reported against Seal. Officials didn’t immediately report the races of Seal or Baez.

Asia

Japan seeks 1st aircraft carrier to deploy stealth fighters

TOKYO (AP)—Japan is seeking to possess its first aircraft carrier to allow for the deployment of U.S.-made stealth fighters as it seeks to bolster its arms capability under a new 10-year defense plan.

A draft outline of Japan's new defense plan, presented by the government Tuesday, proposes refitting an existing helicopter carrier into one that can deploy U.S.-made F-35 stealth fighters capable of short take-offs and vertical landings.

A candidate would be the Maritime Self-Defense Force's helicopter carrier Izu-mo, a 250-meter (820-foot)-long warship that can carry 14 helicopters.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is scrapping the current program after only five years, citing rapid changes in a security environment that requires higher deterrence to cope with threats from North Korea and China.

The new National Defense Program Guidelines are expected next week.

The draft outline says Japan needs more STOVLS such as F-35Bs to beef up its air defense capability in the Pacific, while expanding surveillance in the area. Japan plans to buy 99 F-35s to replace some of the country's fleet of F-15s.

Critics say possessing an



AP
In the Sept. 1, 2018 photo, Japan's helicopter carrier JS Kaga stops at Subic port in Zambales province, the Philippines.

aircraft carrier would give Japan a strike capability in violation to the country's pacifist constitution.

The draft outline also calls for setting up a unit specializing in space, cyberattacks and electronic warfare, while integrating the ground maritime

and air forces to better coordinate operations.

As Japan comes under pressure from President Donald Trump to allow more exports from the U.S., purchases of costly American weapons would be a way to reduce the U.S. trade deficit, while

enhancing military cooperation between the allies. Buying more American weapons, however, would be a setback for Japan's defense industry, which hopes to develop

its own replacement to F-2 fighter jets.

Abe told Tuesday's meeting of government officials and a panel of experts that Japan should "break away from

the conventional concept of ground, maritime and air defense to reform Japan's defense system at a much faster pace into one that is truly necessary as a foundation for the future."

US downgrades Pakistan in religious freedom rankings

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Trump administration on Tuesday placed Pakistan on its annual list of worst offenders for nations that it says infringe on religious freedom.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement he added Pakistan to the U.S. list of "countries of particular concern" regarding protection for people to worship according to their beliefs. Pakistan had previously been on a special watch list for religious freedom. The downgrade means that Pakistan could be hit with U.S. sanctions, although Pompeo waived those penalties in the U.S. national interest.

U.S. Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback said the decision to designate Pakistan was largely the result of criminal blasphemy laws in the country. He said half of the world's population of prisoners jailed for blasphemy are in Pakistan. And he noted the recent high-profile case of Asia Bibi, a Pakistani Christian woman who was recently acquitted of blasphemy but has been unable to leave the country due to riots and death



threats against her.

"It's our hope that the new leadership in Pakistan will work to improve the situation," Brownback told reporters on a conference call to detail Pompeo's findings. "There was some encouraging signs seen recently on how they've handled some of the recent protesting against the blasphemy laws, and we continue to watch very carefully what's happening to Asia Bibi."

Other countries on the blacklist, which calls out nations for "systematic, ongoing and egregious violations of religious freedom," are China,

Eritrea, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. All had been so designated in last year's list. Aside from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan and Turkistan received sanctions waivers.

Uzbekistan had previously been named a "country of particular concern," but Pompeo upgraded it to the special watch list. The watch list now also includes the Comoros Islands and Russia.

In addition, Pompeo designated several Islamic militant groups as "entities of particular concern" as they do not meet the definition of countries. Those are the al-Nusra front in Syria, the Yemen-based al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Qaida, Somalia's al-Shabab, Boko Haram in West Africa, Yemen's Houthi rebels, the Islamic State and the Taliban.

"In far too many places across the globe, individuals continue to face harassment, arrests or even death for simply living their lives in accordance with their beliefs," Pompeo said. "The United States will not stand by as spectators in the face of such oppression."

5 missing Marines declared dead in warplanes crash off Japan

TOKYO (AP)—The U.S. military said Tuesday that five missing crew members have been declared dead after their refueling plane collided with a fighter jet last week off Japan's southern coast, and that search and recovery operations have ended after finding only one survivor.

The five were on a KC-130 Hercules refueling aircraft that collided last Thursday with an F/A-18 Hornet during regular training. The warplanes crashed into the sea south of Japan's Shikoku island.

Two crew members in the F/A-18 were recovered after the accident, but one died. The U.S. Marines said the survivor was in stable condition when rescued.

The search, joined by Japanese and Australian forces, was halted Tuesday, and the cause of the crash is still under investigation, the Marines said in a statement.

It said the identities of the five people declared dead will be released after their next of kin are notified.

The Marines earlier identified the dead pilot of the F/A-18 as Capt. Jahmar Resilard, 28, of Miramar, Florida.

Japanese Prime Minis-

ter Shinzo Abe sent a message of condolences to U.S. President Donald Trump, while praying for a speedy recovery of the injured. Abe thanked American troops for their dedication and vowed to cooperate with Trump to further strengthen their alliance to promote regional peace and stability.

"The loss of the outstanding members of U.S. Marine Corps is my deepest regret, and I myself and the Japanese people share deep sorrow of the American people," Abe said. "Japan-U.S. alliance is supported by the dedication of each U.S. military personnel, and I offer my heartfelt condolences to the victims."

The crew members of the refueling aircraft were based at Iwakuni air station near Hiroshima as part of the Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 152, whose call sign is Sumo.

"All of us in the Sumo family are extremely saddened following the announcement of the conclusion of search and rescue operation," the squadron's commanding officer, Lt. Col. Mitchell T. Maury, said in the statement. "We know this difficult decision

was made after all resources were exhausted in the vigorous search for the Marines."

"Our thoughts are heavy and our prayers are with all family and friends of all five airmen," Maury said.

The Marines statement said it has not been confirmed whether the two planes were involved in aerial refueling when the collision occurred.

The crash is the latest in a series of recent accidents involving U.S. military forces deployed in and near Japan.

Last month, a U.S. Navy F/A-18 Hornet from the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan crashed into the sea southwest of Japan's southern island of Okinawa, though its two pilots were rescued. In mid-October, a MH-60 Seahawk also belonging to the Ronald Reagan crashed off the Philippine Sea shortly after takeoff, causing non-fatal injuries to a dozen sailors.

Two years ago, a MV-22 tilt-rotor aircraft Osprey crashed during a nighttime refueling exercise off the southern island of Okinawa, injuring two crew members.

More than 50,000 U.S. troops are stationed in Japan under a security pact.

World

Attack at Christmas market in French city kills 3, wounds 12

STRASBOURG, France (AP)—A man who had been flagged as a possible extremist sprayed gunfire near the city of Strasbourg's famous Christmas market Tuesday, killing three people, wounding 12 and sparking a massive manhunt. France immediately raised its terror alert level.

It was unclear if the market—a popular gathering place that was the nucleus of an al-Qaida-linked plot in 2000—was the intended target. The assailant got inside a security zone around the venue and opened fire from there, Mayor Roland Ries said on BFM television.

Authorities did not give a motive for the shooting,

though prosecutors said they had opened a terrorism investigation. Strasbourg is home to the European Parliament, one of several places that was locked down after the shooting.

Authorities said they had identified a suspect, and he had a criminal record. The prefect of the Strasbourg region said the man also was on a watch list of people who had potentially radicalized. No other details about him were disclosed.

Hours before the shooting, French gendarmes went to the suspect's home to arrest him, but he wasn't there, Stephane Morisse of police union FGP said. They found explosive materials during a

search, he said.

France, where most of Europe's worst terror attacks of recent years took place, was raising its terror alert level and sending security reinforcements to Strasbourg, Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said early Wednesday.

The attack in Strasbourg came two years after a Tunisian man drove a hijacked truck into a busy Berlin Christmas market, killing 12 people. Strasbourg, which promotes itself as the "Capital of Christmas," is located on France's border with Germany, about 500 kilometers (310 miles) east of Paris. The market is set up around the city's cathedral during the Christmas season.



In this image made from video, emergency services arrive on the scene of a Christmas market in Strasbourg, France, Tuesday, Dec. 11, 2018.

Russia says 114,000 Syrians returned home in 2018

MOSCOW (AP)—Nearly 114,000 Syrian refugees have returned home this year, the Russian military said Tuesday, a mere fraction of the nearly 6 million who have fled the country since the start of the seven-year conflict. U.N. agencies said they need \$5.5 billion in the coming year to support Syria's neighbors hosting the refugees.

The U.N. said Tuesday that Syria's neighbors, Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq, are hosting the majority of the Syrian refugees, while dealing with their own economic and social challenges. The U.N. refugee agency, UNHCR, however, said it has

verified only around 37,000 refugees who have voluntarily returned to Syria in 2018.

The agency also said that over the last eight years around one million Syrian children were born in the region and registered as refugees.

"It is critical that the international community continues to recognize the plight of Syrian refugees and provides vital support to host governments and (U.N. agencies and NGO) partners to help shoulder this massive burden, while waiting for voluntary return in safety and dignity" said Amin Awad, the U.N. refugee agency director for the Middle East and North Africa.

Awad said the U.N. is projecting that up to 250,000 refugees could be returning to Syria next year if obstacles to their return are removed. Those obstacles include safety concerns for those who have fled government areas or military conscriptions, availability of services and other issues.

Russia, which has waged a military campaign in 2015 in support of Syrian President Bashar Assad, has pushed for the repatriation of refugees. Russian and Syrian officials have accused Western governments of blocking the return of refugees and reconstruction aid to Syria.

WORLD BRIEFS

Russia: Putin says he only heard of alleged spy after arrest

MOSCOW (AP)—Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday that he had never heard of a woman who is accused of spying for Moscow in the United States until her July arrest. U.S. prosecutors have alleged that Maria Butina gathered intelligence and worked to develop relationships with American politicians through the National Rifle Association. They also alleged that a former Russian lawmaker who was subject to U.S. sanctions for alleged ties to Putin directed Butina's activities. Butina is charged with conspiracy and acting as an unregistered foreign agent for the Russia government. U.S. prosecutors indicated in a court filing Monday that she has accepted a plea deal. Putin said at a meeting of the presidential human rights council on Tuesday that he asked Russian intelligence services for information about 30-year-old Butina after he heard about the "poor girl" who faces 15 years in prison.

Gunman kills 4, then himself, after Mass at Brazil cathedral

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—A man opened fire in a cathedral in southern Brazil after Mass on Tuesday, killing four people and wounding four more before taking a bullet in the ribs in a firefight with police and then shooting himself in the head, authorities said. The shooting happened right after the midday service had ended at the Metropolitan Cathedral in Campinas, a

city about 60 miles (100 kilometers) north of Sao Paulo. "It's so sad," said Wilson Cassante, a press officer with the archdiocese. "It's hard to imagine the pain this has caused." Hours after paramedics were seen taking bodies and injured out of the church, authorities identified the shooter as 49-year-old Euler Fernando Grandolpho from Valinhos, a nearby city in the densely populated state of Sao Paulo. Grandolpho, a systems analyst, was not a member of the church, authorities said. According to public records, he had held various jobs with government entities, including a stint as an assistant to the prosecutor in the public ministry in Sao Paulo.

Iraqi jets target Islamic State meeting dens in Syria

BAGHDAD (AP)—The Iraqi military says its jets have bombed two Islamic State positions inside Syria that were being used for as meeting places for the jihadist group. Iraq's Joint Operations Command said in a statement on Tuesday that at least 30 IS members were present in one of the locations targeted and another 14 members in the other. The statement said the information was gathered from intelligence sources. Both positions were in the area of Sousa, near the border with Iraq. Iraqi forces have been firing on IS positions across the border in eastern Syria to support the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces in their push against the last IS pocket along the border.

In Loving Memory of

† *Maria Rose Arriola Agulto*

Better known as "Mary"

Born: January 4, 1971 | Died: December 8, 2018

In her new life, she now joins her:

Parents:	Antonio Santos Arriola Cecilia Aguon Arriola
Father in law:	Francisco Pangelinan Agulto
Son:	Pauleus Arriola Agulto
Brother/Sister/In-Laws:	Miguel Aguon Arriola Francisco Aguon Arriola Abelina Arriola Cruz Melton Agulto Jarissa Agulto Jesus Santos Arriola
Nephew/Niece:	
Uncle:	

Her loving memories will forever live in the heart of her:

Husband:	Newly Aldan Agulto
Mother in law:	Escolastica Aldan Agulto
Children:	Neyton, Franklin/ Tanya, Courtney/ Richard, Monique/ Dexter
Grandchildren:	Avery, Avonie, Conner, Elijah, Deon, Anaya, Roselei & Avonarie
Siblings:	Jesus Aguon Arriola/ Violy Arriola Frances Arriola Sablan/ Ramon Sablan Joseph Aguon Arriola/ Tina Fujihira Mariano Aguon Arriola/ Judy Arriola Antonio Aguon Arriola/ Lorraine Arriola John Wayne Arriola Jayson Arriola
Brother & Sister in law:	Mar Cruz & Family Patricia S. Arriola & Family Rosa Sanchez/ Anecio Mitsuru & Family Gloria Agulto Cabrera/ Kasimiro Cabrera & Family Carla Agulto Borja/ Ed Pangelinan & Family Diana Agulto Lairopi & Family Gina Lyn Aldan Agulto & Family Clarissa Aldan Agulto/ Jason Mad & Family Sonia Agulto Deleon Guerrero/ Raymond Deleon Guerrero & Family

Daily mass is being held at Santa Soledad Parish Church, Kagman at 6:00 pm. On Monday, December 17, 2018 her body will be escorted from Borja Funeral home to the Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 7:30 am. Funeral Service will follow at 10:00 am.

Environment

Ongoing spill in Mexico is flooding Tijuana River with millions of gallons of raw sewage



Imperial Beach Mayor Serge Dedina surveys the Tijuana River Valley and the sewage mixed with rainwater runoff from the recent rains that flowed into the river valley, as seen from near the bridge over the river on Dairy Mart Road on Tuesday, Dec. 11, 2018. According to the mayor, a break in a collector pipe located on the Mexico side of the border, in the background, in Tijuana occurred during or sometime after the rains last week.

By JOSHUA EMERSON SMITH
THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

SAN DIEGO—The equivalent of more than 6 million gallons a day of raw sewage has been spilling into the Tijuana River since Monday night, according to federal officials.

The U.S. section of the International Boundary and Water Commission, or IBWC,

said Tuesday that counterparts in Mexico informed the agency that the cause of the sewage leak was a ruptured collector pipe. Federal officials said the aging collector underwent millions of dollars in upgrades over the last year but had yet to be fully rehabilitated.

“We are in close contact with Mexico,” said Lori Kuczumanski, spokeswoman for IBWC. “We have engineers in the field getting the details of the incident.”

Shorelines from Imperial Beach to Coronado have been shuttered for several days because of polluted water flushed through the Tijuana River by recent rains, according to the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health.

However, this recent spill could dramatically exacerbate the situation.

“There’s communication from the IBWC, but Mexico should have let us know yesterday,” said Imperial Beach

Mayor Serge Dedina, who has called for an investigation into when the spill occurred. “There’s no way that a pipe broke down three days after the flood. It seems suspicious.”

South Bay beaches are routinely inundated with polluted water from Mexico, especially during rain events when pumps that suck water out of the Tijuana River must be turned off because of limited capacity. Wastewater is supposed to be treated before

it’s emptied into the river, but flows are routinely mixed with other pollutants, including raw sewage from cracked pipes.

Residents are advised to stay out of the ocean 72 hours after it rains because of contamination from urban runoff, but sewage-tainted pollution is far more dangerous. Raw effluent can carry pathogens, such as E. coli, Vibrio and salmonella, as well as several viruses and intestinal parasites that can cause everything from diarrhea to meningitis to respiratory infections.

filed our lawsuit,” Dedina said. “We should have infrastructure that can capture the sewage and send it back into the system.”

The federal government has said it isn’t legally responsible for the renegade flows that escape its collection systems, pointing out that the situation would be significantly worse without its efforts.

Before the federal government spent roughly \$344 million to create its diversion and treatment system in the 1990s, millions of gallons of sewage would flow daily down the Tijuana River into San Diego County.

In September, California Attorney General Xavier Becerra joined the cities of Imperial Beach, Chula Vista and the Port of San Diego in suing the Trump administration over sewage spills and other toxic flows coming from Mexico.

The lawsuit by the local agencies seeks to force the federal government to upgrade the capacity of the pumps in the river as well as catchment basins in nearby canyons. The systems are intended to divert flows to the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant before they can foul beaches.

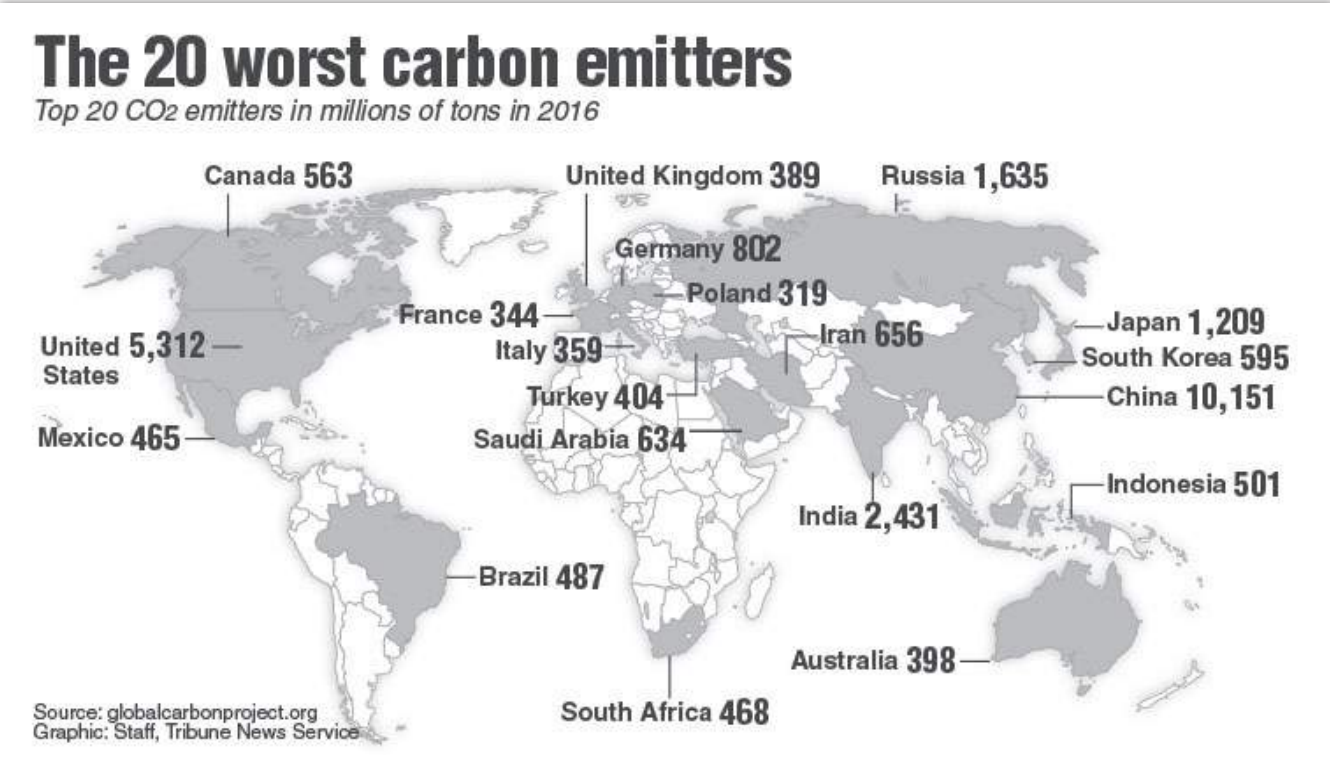
The state’s lawsuit focuses more narrowly on water pollution flowing through the canyons.

“This is exactly why we

Officials with IBWC have for several years attempted to work with officials in Baja to outline a spending blueprint for improving the region’s failing wastewater infrastructure. However, so far, only limited progress has been made.

If this latest spill continues unabated, it could be the largest since February 2017 when a pipe burst and flooded the river with at least 28 million gallons of raw sewage, tainting coastal waters for weeks.

According to county records, the Imperial Beach shoreline is off limits to swimmers about a third of the year on average as a result of water pollution from Tijuana.



Life & Style

2018 breakthrough: Henry Golding of 'Crazy Rich Asians'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Even though Henry Golding garnered instant fame from starring in the smash hit "Crazy Rich Asians," the British-Malaysian actor isn't sure if he'll ever eclipse his meteoric

success in the box-office hit. "I don't know how I'm going to top this year. It's all downhill from here," he told The Associated Press recently, with a twinge of sarcasm.

Even Golding knows that

viewers are clamoring for more of the 31-year-old actor, who starred in his first-ever movie role as the suave, Oxford-educated heir Nick Young in "Crazy Rich Asians," the romantic comedy that spent three weeks at the top of the North American box office and grossed more than \$173 million in North America alone.

It was the first Hollywood film to have a predominantly Asian-American cast since "The Joy Luck Club," which debuted 25 years ago.

Golding had a sense the movie would resonate with audiences when filming it

because it "was an amazing work of art." But it wasn't until after the movie's release that he was able to measure its impact on viewers.

"That's when I started getting messages. People were

coming up to me saying the movie is amazing. You guys did such a fantastic job. It means so much to me to see our faces portrayed on the big screen," he said. "For me, it was wild."

Henry Golding's impressive performance in "Crazy Rich Asians" has helped him land



Golding

more movie roles, with the actor saying "Definitely the best is yet to come. This is literally just a start." (Dec. 11)

For Golding, his rise has certainly been pretty wild ever since director Jon M. Chu chose him to star in "Crazy Rich Asians" without any movie appearances. Golding had primarily worked as a television host for shows on BBC, Discovery Channel Asia and ESPN Asia networks.

Now, Golding is on the fast track as others are seeing the potential in him. After "Crazy

Rich Asians," he took on a much darker role in Paul Feig's thriller "A Simple Favor" starring Blake Lively and Anna Kendrick.

Next, Golding will be playing a gay British-Vietnamese man who travels to his birth country in Vietnam to scatter the ashes of his parents in the film "Monsoon," expected to be released in 2019. He'll also star in Guy Ritchie's "Toff Guys" with Matthew McConaughey and Kate Beckinsale.

Golding said his recent projects have given him more confidence. He's been putting in extra work through acting classes to hone his skills.

Celebrities flock to Indian business scions' lavish wedding

NEW DELHI (AP)—In a season of big Indian weddings, the marriage of two business scions on Wednesday is set to be the biggest of them all.

Isha Ambani is the Ivy League-educated daughter of Mukesh Ambani, chairman and majority stakeholder in oil and gas giant Reliance Industries, whose net worth Forbes estimates at over \$43 billion.

Her groom, Anand Piramal, is the son of Indian industrialist Ajay Piramal, whose namesake conglomerate is estimated to be worth

over \$10 billion.

At one of the couple's pre-wedding events on Sunday, Beyonce performed for a star-studded gathering at a 16th-century palace in the Indian city of Udaipur. Guests included Hillary Clinton and a host of Bollywood A-listers.

The competitiveness of India's wintertime wedding season is growing more extreme, exacerbating the pressure on regular Indians to go into debt to finance elaborate weddings, according to Archana Dalmia, a social activist in New Delhi.

Michelle Obama surprises Detroit students at Motown Museum

DETROIT (AP)—Michelle Obama surprised a group of Detroit college students on Tuesday afternoon, walking into the Motown Museum as the young men of color took part in a roundtable discussion on education.

The former first lady was greeted with smiles, looks of astonishment and applause after entering the second floor of the building where Berry Gordy created sonic history more than a half-century ago. She hugged her brother Craig Robinson and

Keegan-Michael Key, an actor and native Detroit who moderated the discussion that was organized by Obama's Reach Higher initiative.

"This was supposed to be for boys only," Robinson said after they sat down, eliciting laughter from his sister and the more than a dozen students from nearby Wayne State University.

"What's going on," Obama then asked, echoing the title of Marvin Gaye's classic Motown tune.

Nick Cannon sees irony in the way Oscars handled Kevin Hart

NEW YORK (AP)—Nick Cannon isn't just defending his friend and fellow comedian Kevin Hart over the Oscars hosting controversy. He's also going after the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences itself.

Cannon was one of many cheering the decision to appoint Hart as host of the Feb. 24 telecast but then with dismay watched as his friend voluntarily stepped down following an outcry over past homophobic tweets.

Hart contended he'd already addressed those tweets and they no longer represented his views.

Cannon, who on Monday was promoting his new show, "The Masked Singer," told The Associated Press he

talked with Hart during the controversy, and said "I felt that the Academy actually could've handled it in a different way." He added that organizers should have done their research before offering Hart the gig.

Study finds female-led films outperform male ones

NEW YORK (AP)—Female-led films have consistently outperformed male-led movies at the box office, according to a study initiated by Time's Up, the organization formed by prominent women in the entertainment industry to promote gender equality.

The study analyzed the 350 top-grossing films worldwide released between January 2014 and December 2017. Researchers found that in films with small, medium and large budgets, all averaged better global grosses when a woman was listed as the lead star.



AP
This image released by Warner Bros. Entertainment shows Gal Gadot in a scene from "Wonder Woman."

Conducted by the talent agency Creative Artists Agency and the tech company shift7, the study found that films that passed the Bechdel test do better, too. The Bechdel test, an invention of the cartoonist Alison Bechdel, rates whether a movie features two female characters having a conversation about something other than a man.

Wife can no longer endure vicious tales man's ex tells

DEAR ABBY: I have been with my husband for five years, and we have two children together. It's my husband's second marriage and my first. He and his first wife, "Gretchen," had no kids, but they did have a long and messy divorce. She and her family live in the same small town as we do. Her favorite pastime is telling anyone who will listen that my husband physically abused and raped her.

I know my husband. In our five years together he has never so much as raised his voice to me or our children. I don't presume to know what happened between him and Gretchen during their marriage, but I know in my heart it never got physical. I have spent five years listening to this garbage and hearing her put him down and say nasty things about me. I have reached my limit. Should I confront her or just keep refusing to acknowledge her?

DRAMA WITH HIS EX

DEAR DRAMA: You know that what your husband's ex is saying isn't true because you have been with your husband long enough to see the kind of person he is. Continue to ignore and avoid her. If someone repeats her stories, tell them that **IN YOUR EXPERIENCE** what she's saying couldn't be further from the truth. People who know you

will understand what Gretchen's saying for what it is—unhappiness and vindictiveness.

DEAR ABBY: I'm at a loss and need some outside advice. I'm a man, married for two years. My husband and I have a great marriage, but last week my father was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer, and I'm having trouble processing it. My husband is super supportive and has had my back 100 percent. But yesterday I woke up and a friend of mine wanted to meet with me and we ended up having sex.

What's wrong with me? I have never cheated before. I have been cheated on in the past, and I know how much it hurt, so I vowed never to do it. But it just happened. I regret what I did, and I feel gross. Why would I do this? Is it my way of coping with Dad's illness? I need to understand what the hell happened. Please help.

OFF THE RAILS

DEAR OFF: I, too, suspect that your infidelity may be related to trying to deal with your father's diagnosis. It is not as unusual as you may think for people to react to grief, trauma or death by doing something uncharacteristic. However, if this becomes your default coping mechanism, discuss it with a licensed psychotherapist so it doesn't de-

DEAR ABBY

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

stroy your marriage.

P.S. Unplanned sexual encounters can have unplanned consequences. To make sure this one hasn't, contact your doctor about being checked for an STD. And consider coming clean to your husband, because it would be disastrous if your friend let the truth slip out accidentally. (And, of course, if you've developed an STD, tell your husband right away.)

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$14 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

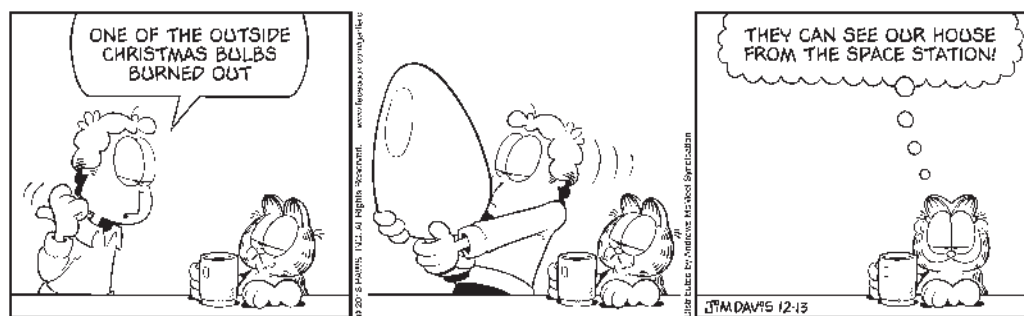
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



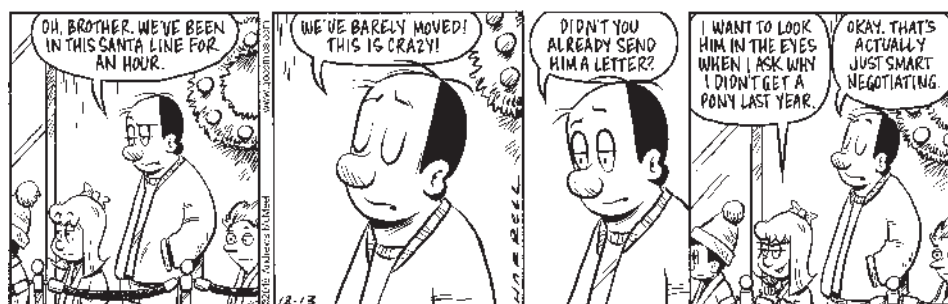
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Hot tub
4 Revue segment
8 "Memory" musical
12 Dawn goddess
13 Theater award
14 Lotion additive
15 Footnote indicator
17 Apportion
18 Punk rock offshoot
19 Verizon, for one
21 Hedge plants
24 Erie Canal mule
25 Overly
26 Nosh
28 Coffee flavor
32 "Topaz" author
34 PC alternative
36 Implement
37 Tennis star
39 Glutton
41 Code-breaking gp.

DOWN

1 Poseidon's home
2 Not neg.
3 Space rock
4 Flashing disco spike
5 Japanese pond carp
6 "Meet Me — Louis"
7 Moppets
8 King Arthur's realm
9 Actor Baldwin
10 Dorothy's dog
11 Appear out slowly
16 Outback bird
20 Felon's flight
21 Dazzle dance
22 Circle
23 Muppet eagle
27 Spigot
29 Partner of
30 Nozzle site
31 Actor Rickman
33 Stockpiles
35 Spy org.
38 Like Abner
40 Inn crowd
43 "Hay-stacks" painter
45 Pouch
46 Slangy OKs
47 Peter Fonda's bee-keeper role
48 Old Italian money
49 Richard of "Chicago"
53 Pallid
54 HBO competitor
55 Your

Solution time: 24 mins.

A	M	P	D	O	E	R	F	E	S	T	
S	U	E	I	N	M	E	I	N	K	S	
A	I	P	R	O	U	N	D	T	R	I	P
P	R	O	D	E	C	A	T				
H	E	A	C	E	R	M	E	G	A	N	
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C	L	A	S	S	D	A	F	F	E		
A	E	R	O	A	U	T	O	A	T	L	
D	E	A	N	R	E	E	D	Y	A	K	

Yesterday's answer 12-13

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Taylor Swift, 29; Jamie Foxx, 51; Wendie Malick, 68; Christopher Plummer, 89.

Happy Birthday: Your words will travel far if you are articulate, honest and sincere. Don't be afraid to show your emotions and to fight for the underdog. Take it upon yourself to be the one to make a difference and to set the record straight. Learn from your experience and deal with the here and now with positive thoughts and actions. Your numbers are 7, 13, 20, 29, 38, 41, 47.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Change begins within. Take a closer look at what you've faced and accomplished as well as what you have left to do before the year comes to a close. Organization will help you enter into a new phase of life with optimism. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): If something isn't working for you, it's time to make a change. Size up your situation and set your plans in motion. Let your heart and instincts guide you to a place that is comforting and less stressful. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Confusion will set in if you let someone get to you emotionally. Don't be afraid to question what others say about you or how you live your life. You are the one who has to live with the decisions you make. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Express your true feelings and discuss future plans. Don't be afraid to show emotion or to share your ideas and solutions. Communica-

tion will be your pathway to success and achieving the happiness you desire. Romance is highlighted. *****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Participate in events that require mental and physical expertise, but don't allude to being able to offer more than you can. Living up to your word will be instrumental in how others perceive you. Strive to uphold your reputation. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Get out and enjoy the spirit of the season. Don't forget to include the people you count on all year long for support. Memories are built through sharing experiences and showing how much you care. Romance is in the stars. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Share stories and attend events that will bring you in touch with those you haven't seen for some time. A little laughter and commiserating will be good for the soul and help you put your life in perspective. *****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't leave someone out because you think he or she is too young or too old. It's important to share with everyone. The kindness and consideration you offer to others will not be wasted and will come back to you twofold. **

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Check information thoroughly. Poor diagnosis of a situation can lead you on a goose chase. In order to make wise choices, you have to know what you are up against. Be prepared to make a sudden change if necessary. *****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Emotions will surface in situations that require you to help someone in need. Embrace those going through tough times and offer hope along with suggestions. A change of heart will lead to a closer relationship with someone you love. ****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Finish what you start and feel good about what you accomplish. Your hard work will bring about positive change as you head toward the new year. Keep secrets locked in a safe place. Don't feel obligated to share personal information. ***

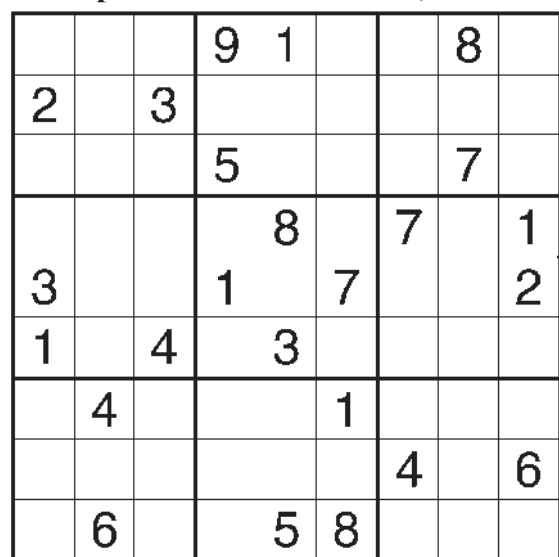
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Listen but don't respond if it will get you into trouble. Emotional matters will escalate quickly, and taking the time to think matters through is in your best interest. Romance and making a physical improvement should be your priorities. ***

Birthday Baby: You are strong, innovative and proactive. You are reserved and circumspect. To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

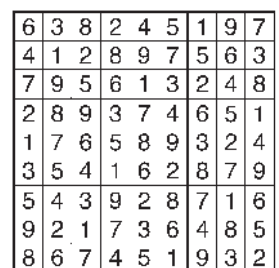


Difficulty Level ★★

12/13

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★★

12/13

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

ICE WALKING IN ALBERTA

Solution: 8 letters

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I A E S R S R U O T T E N O S
N C T Z T A E F E T R I E T E
E A I W O H L I N O A K R S L
C A T C A R G L G R V C E N B
S D D U L L F I I G E O S H B
E A E V R E K E L P L R A O U
R N L L E S A A I E I S J B
U A S S L N T S M D B K A M G
T C G A O P T E L M E S I F E
P O C Y A E S U U E P L D I O
L S N W M T O L R E C A V E L
U A N L O B O C R E E K A L O
C U E N A C S A B A H T A D G
S H E F F N A B P A R K W A Y

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12/13

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Yesterday's Answer: Dinner

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Phillies add McCutchen, still eye Harper, Machado



LAS VEGAS—To the surprise of no

one, the Philadelphia Phillies made the first big free-agent strike at baseball's winter meetings, agreeing to a multi-year deal with an All-Star outfielder.

That it was Andrew McCutchen and not Bryce Harper, however, does not mean the Phillies will be out of the market for this winter's biggest prizes.

The Phillies reached agreement with McCutchen on a three-year deal worth \$50 million, according to a person with direct knowledge of the agreement. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal was not yet official.

McCutchen, 32, is a five-time All-Star who spent all but 2018 with the Pittsburgh Pirates. They traded him to the San Francisco Giants before last season, and he was a respected veteran member of that club and the New York Yankees—batting leadoff for them in the playoffs — before becoming a free agent for the first time.

Odubel Herrera will hold down center field, but the relatively modest commitment to McCutchen and the roster flexibility they maintain certainly doesn't rule out a run at Harper or third baseman Manny Machado, each of which should exceed \$300 million in contract value.

McCutchen produced 20 home runs and a .368 on-base percentage with the Giants



and Yankees and should flourish playing full-time in Citizens Bank Park. The 2013 NL MVP has a lifetime .859 OPS and 223 home runs.

He'll also add a significant

dose of veteran accountability to a club that foundered at times during its surprise run at contention in 2017, when a September fade handed the division to the Atlanta Braves.

"I think the way you prepare for it to happen is by building emotional armor, physical armor, in the offseason, and kind of the mental preparation that this is going to happen,"

English teams edge Italians to advance in Champions League

GENEVA (AP)—It ended England 2, Italy 0 on a tense night of decisive Champions League group games on Tuesday.

Liverpool advanced to the round of 16 by beating Napoli 1-0, though it relied on a stoppage-time save by goalkeeper Alisson Becker. Tottenham is also in Monday's draw after defying expectations in Barcelona thanks to Lucas Moura's 85th-minute leveler in a 1-1 draw.

Even with that point, Tottenham still needed Inter Milan to fail to beat winless PSV Eindhoven—and it ended 1-1 in San Siro.

Both English teams overcame nervous endings to finish runner-up in their groups, and edged head-to-head tiebreakers with Italian rivals after finishing level on points.

A late goal in any of the three games would have changed the equation but Alisson saved Liverpool, second-half substitute Lionel Messi couldn't lift Barcelona, and Inter failed to find a winner in seven minutes of stoppage time.

Napoli kicked off Tuesday leading Group C but dropped below Liverpool and Paris Saint-Germain, which won

4-1 at Red Star Belgrade to advance in top spot.

The four qualifying places in the other two groups playing Tuesday were decided last month.

Still, Borussia Dortmund's 2-0 win at Monaco meant it rose above Atletico Madrid—which drew 0-0 at Club Brugge—to win Group A.

Porto had already clinched Group D's top spot before winning 3-2 at Galatasaray, and runner-up Schalke beat visiting Lokomotiv Moscow 1-0.

Group winners will be drawn against a runner-up and play the second leg at home in the round of 16.

Third-place teams transfer to the Europa League's round of 32, which is also drawn Monday at UEFA headquarters.

Napoli and Inter are joined there by Club Brugge and Galatasaray.

England is having a stellar year on the international stage compared to four-time world champion Italy.

The English reached the semifinals at the World Cup in Russia, for which Italy failed to qualify, and advanced to the

Nations League Final Four. Italy could have hosted that mini-tournament next June but failed to advance from a group won by Portugal.

Now, England will have all four of its teams in the Champions League round of 16 draw because both Manchester clubs, City and United, already secured their places before playing Wednesday.

After Napoli and Inter were eliminated Tuesday, Italy has just two teams in the draw. Juventus and Roma are also already through ahead of their final group-stage game Wednesday.

Liverpool gave its fans a nervous night at Anfield, scoring just once from 21 attempts on goal. Sadio Mane was the biggest culprit, wasting three clear chances to give his team extra margin for error.

Only a reflex save at the end by Brazilian goalkeeper Alisson denied Napoli substitute Arkadiusz Milik.

Liverpool will be without center back Virgil van Dijk in its first leg at home in the next round. Van Dijk will be sus-

pended for getting a third yellow card in the group stage. It could have been more, as a tackle on Dries Mertens followed through on the Napoli forward's lower left leg and risked a red card.

Tottenham was minutes from exiting the competition, trailing to a superb seventh-minute solo goal from Ousmane Dembele, who shot past his France teammate Hugo Lloris.

Barcelona rested several regular starters, yet still dominated much of the game with Philippe Coutinho twice striking the woodwork.

Harry Kane then found Moura unmarked near the six-yard box to score past back-up goalkeeper Jasper Cillessen.

Inter trailed for much of the game to PSV, who took the lead in the 13th from Mexico winger Chucky Lozano's goal.

Mauro Icardi's fourth goal in the competition in the 73rd was not enough for Inter, which won its opening two games then failed to win any of the next four.

Paris Saint-Germain began its group with a loss at Liverpool but went unbeaten the rest of the way, scoring 17 goals in total.

AP
Arizona Diamondbacks catcher Alex Avila, right, tags out San Francisco Giants' Andrew McCutchen during the sixth inning of a baseball game Tuesday, April 10, 2018, in San Francisco. McCutchen attempted to score on a hit by Brandon Crawford.

Kapler said Monday at the winter meetings. "And I'm not sure that everybody was 100% prepared for that outcome."

"And when we're sitting in the middle of July and we are in first place, and we are a very good baseball team—I think we could have prepared for that moment a little bit better, mentally, physically, and emotionally."

For now, that "armor" comes in the form of a respected and productive veteran outfielder.

Meanwhile, Troy Tulowitzki has been released by the Toronto Blue Jays, who owe the oft-injured shortstop \$38 million for the remaining two years of his contract.

Now 34, Tulowitzki has not played in the major leagues since July 2017. He was limited that year to 66 games because of a hamstring and right ankle injury. The ankle required surgery last spring and he missed the entire season.

Red Sox not looking to cut top payroll

LAS VEGAS (AP)— The champion Boston Red Sox aren't looking to cut the biggest payroll in the big leagues.

After exceeding all three luxury tax thresholds paid off in a World Series title, the Red Sox anticipate going over the levels again next year even though they're increasing.

Red Sox president of baseball operations Dave Dombrowski dismissed reports he is trying to trade some high-priced players, such as pitcher Rick Porcello.

"I've heard those tweets," he said Tuesday at the winter meetings. "We're not looking to move anybody. We're not driven to move anybody."

Boston had the highest payroll for the first time in the free agent era. The Red Sox luxury tax payroll as of Aug. 31 was nearly \$239 million, and Dombrowski said he thinks the Red Sox will be over \$246 million next season.

The Red Sox re-signed pitcher Nathan Eovaldi last week to a \$68 million, four-year contract.

Last season, Boston far exceeded the \$197 million luxury tax threshold, the \$217 million level for the first surcharge and the \$237 million where a second surcharge starts.

That put the Red Sox on

track for a luxury tax of more than \$11 million and an additional penalty in next June's amateur draft. Boston's first pick, currently 33rd, will be dropped down 10 slots.

Next year's tax starts at \$206 million, and Boston's initial rate will rise from 20 percent to 30 percent on its overage. The surtax on the first \$20 million over goes up from 32 percent to 42 percent, and the surtax on the amount over that increases from 62.5 percent to 75 percent.

Dombrowski said his preference would be to drop below the highest surtax but "it's not a mandate."

Payroll-paring is not the goal. "We're not driven by that fact, that approach," he said. "I would say you always listen to anything. You can always get better."

Still, the Red Sox must prepare for future years. Ace Chris Sale and Porcello are eligible for free agency after the 2019 season.

"I know long-term we're not going to be able to sign all of our players," Dombrowski said. "That brings about conversations and people calling you about various things. But I would say I guarantee you our primary focus is to try to win a world championship in 2019, to try to repeat."

Davis ignores leading questions about Celtics



BOSTON—The media fished for a soundbite to feed the trade rumor mill that has linked New Orleans Pelicans superstar Anthony Davis and the asset-heavy Celtics so often over the past few seasons.

“Hey, did you hear that Boston crowd cheering for you? How does that make you feel? Is this season going OK for you? All those injuries must be awfully frustrating. By the way, did you hear that crowd?”

You could almost see the questions flip a switch behind his knowing eyes, turning on the robotic answering machine so as not to fuel sensational headlines, and even then the media had its soundbite.

“I heard it tonight,” Davis said after his team’s 113-100 loss to a Celtics team sans Kyrie Irving, Gordon Hayward and Al Horford, among others. “I’m trying to do whatever I can to help this team get wins with the roster we have. It’s been a rocky season, so it’s on me to try to figure it out. I know the team follows me. I’m the leader, and I’ve got to be the one to make sure that we’re ready to play every night. So, for me, I just go out there and play with this team and try to have fun and get wins. That’s all I’m worried about is getting wins for this team, and hopefully we can get further than we did last year.”

In that generic response, Davis walked the tightrope of acknowledging the very thing that has so many wondering when he’ll flex his muscle and force his way out of town a la Irving, Paul George, Kawhi Leonard and Jimmy Butler: The Pelicans aren’t good enough to get him where he wants to go. On the bright side for New Orleans, he’s still talking himself into their ability to contend when healthy.

“We had everybody healthy the first four games, and we went 4-0,” Davis added after scoring 41 of his team’s 100 points. “Then, Elfrid [Payton] goes down, I’ve been out a couple games, Niko [Mirotic]—a lot of guys have been out. Every time we’ve had a full roster, we’re a tough team to beat, but we still have to find a way to win.”

After two straight lottery campaigns, the Pelicans showed what they could do with that chance last season, sweeping the Portland Trail Blazers in the first round and taking a single game from the Golden State Warriors in the Western Conference semifinals.

In the face of the NBA’s super-team era, every super-

star realizes he can’t figure it out on his own. Davis was inching toward that realization when he asked in December 2017, “Does this organization really have my back?” Or when, a few months later, he wondered if he was walking the same path that led Kevin Garnett to regret not asking out of Minnesota earlier in his career. Or when he fired his agent over the summer to hire Rich Paul, the coordinator of LeBron James’ many moves.

It does not appear Davis has reached that point. At least, he’s not making it known through backchannels the way Irving, George, Leonard and Butler did. And he’s not telling us publicly after a mid-December loss against the Celtics that dropped the Pelicans below .500, two games out of a playoff spot with three-quarters of the season still to play. Davis professed confidence that Jrue Holiday, Randle, Mirotic, Payton and company could help get him back to the playoffs this season.

The Pelicans were without Payton (fractured left pinkie) on Monday and will be until January. Mirotic left seven minutes into the game after re-injuring his ankle. Davis still thought they had enough to beat an undermanned Celtics team similar to the one that reached the Eastern Conference finals last season.

With a handful of first-round picks in 2019 and a cache of recent lottery picks on the roster, the Celtics have the assets to make a deal if and when the Pelicans ever make Davis available, which is why they



AP
New Orleans Pelicans forward Anthony Davis (23), left, drives against Boston Celtics forward Marcus Morris during the second quarter of a basketball game in Boston, Monday, Dec. 10, 2018.

and the Los Angeles Lakers are most often linked to the 25-year-old. The rumors became so pervasive last year that Davis had to ask Pelicans general manager Dell Demps if there was fire to the smoke. “He told me that [Boston] was calling,” Davis said a season ago, “but nothing was going to happen.”

Around that time, a league source assured that Demps would rather trade his first-born than Davis.

“You should never trade Anthony Davis unless you have no choice.” As for diminishing returns, “He will be wanted by 30 teams, not two or three like Butler—plus by trading, he gets Bird rights.”

In other words, it seems we could still be a ways off from Davis trade drama, as low as the Pelicans’ ceiling seems and as hard as the media might have tried to make it happen in Boston on Monday.

“That’s what you guys do,” Pelicans coach Alvin Gentry told reporters in Boston. “You guys talk about it. He’s here. He’s playing on our team. We’re trying to win games. That’s the only thing that matters right now.”

That doesn’t mean the questions won’t be asked when New Orleans visits the Lakers next week.

Harden scores 29 to lead Rockets past Blazers

HOUSTON (AP)—The Houston Rockets’ bench came to the rescue twice Tuesday night, and the second time made the difference.

James Harden had 29 points and seven Rockets scored in double-figures as Houston used a big second-half run and snapped a three-game losing streak with a 111-103 victory over the Portland Trail Blazers.

Chris Paul added a triple-double with 11 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists. Clint Capela had 13 points and seven rebounds before fouling out with five minutes left, and Eric Gordon, who started in place of James Ennis, had 14 points for the Rockets, who shot 49 percent from the field.

“We did a good job of just competing, playing harder,” Harden said. “That was really it—playing harder and got into them. We were a little more aggressive. Good things seem to happen when you

play harder.”

Houston’s bench played a key role in a 24-6 first-half run that erased a 15-point deficit, and then led a charge in the second half. Gerald Green had 13 points, and Danuel House had 12 off the bench.

“They won the game for us,” Houston coach Mike D’Antoni said of the bench. “They turned it around when we were down 15, and they came in, and Nene, Danuel House and Gerald put a lot of energy.”

Damian Lillard had 34 points, CJ McCollum scored 22 points and Jusuf Nurkic added 15 points and 10 rebounds for Portland, which shot 44 percent after starting the game by making seven of its first nine shots.

“I thought Houston played pretty aggressive defense on us,” Portland coach Terry Stotts said. “We took some possessions for granted and some turnovers led to their transition.

Obviously, their bench came in and had an impact on the game. They just outplayed us in the second half.”

Spurs 111, Suns 86

In San Antonio, Bryn Forbes was happy to finally earn the first double-double of his basketball career, and even happier that it came in another Spurs victory grounded in defense.

Forbes had a season-high 24 points and a career-best 11 rebounds as the Spurs beat the Phoenix Suns.

Since his days on the playground in elementary school until now, Forbes never had a double-double, and the odds of accomplishing it weren’t great. Generously listed at 6 foot 3, his previous career-high in rebounds was five, but he surpassed that in the third quarter.

“That’s important to me,” Forbes said. “I’ve been playing my whole life and to accomplish something I’ve

never accomplished is always pretty cool, but to get the win was bigger. We needed this win worse than I needed a double-double.”

The Spurs held the Suns to a season-low output for an opponent, two weeks after a four-game stretch in which three opponents beat them by 30-plus points.

San Antonio has won three straight halfway through a six-game homestand. The Spurs, who were allowing 113.3 points per game, have limited their opponents to 101 points during their winning streak.

Raptors 123, Clippers 99

In Los Angeles, Toronto Raptors coach Nick Nurse rejoined his team in Los Angeles after the death of his 94-year-old mother and guided them to a win over the Clippers.

Nurse said his mother, Marcella Nurse, died Monday

in Iowa, where he was born in the city of Carroll.

He coached Tuesday night against the Clippers and plans to Wednesday at Golden State before returning to Iowa.

“I’m here because my mother wouldn’t want it any other way,” Nurse said before the game.

In June, Nurse was promoted from assistant to head coach of the Raptors after Dwane Casey was fired. He has led the team to a record of 22-7, best in the NBA. Tuesday’s game came without Kawhi Leonard, who sat out with a bruised right hip that he hurt against Milwaukee last Sunday. Still, the Raptors managed to hand the Clippers their worst loss of the season.

“She had a big impact because she had nine of us and I was the last one,” the 51-year-old coach said of his mother. “Lots of games—94 years, nine kids and about 80,000 games watched are her final stats.”

Chiefs replace Rams atop poll; Saints remain No. 2



NEW YORK
(AP)—Kansas City's Patrick Mahomes has had a special

season so far.

A league-leading 43 touchdown passes.

A no-look pass against the Baltimore Ravens.

And he has led the Chiefs to the top of latest AP Pro32 poll.

The Chiefs received seven of 12 first-place votes for 379 points in balloting Tuesday by media members who regularly cover the NFL.

Kansas City (11-2) moved up a couple of spots to No. 1 after rallying for an overtime victory over Baltimore. The Chiefs clinched a playoff berth and maintained a one-game lead over the Los Angeles Chargers in the AFC West.

"There were no gaudy stats for MVP candidate Patrick Mahomes against Baltimore's rock-solid defense, but there were clutch plays in crunch time in an overtime win that may be the deciding factor in securing home-field advantage in the AFC playoffs," Newsday's Bob Glauber said.

The Saints (11-2) received the remaining five first-place votes for 376 points to stay at No. 2.

The Chargers (10-3)



jumped two spots to No. 4 and travel to Arrowhead Stadium on Thursday night to face the Chiefs to open Week 15.

"Can they beat the Chiefs?" Fox Sports' John Czarnecki asked of the Chargers.

The Rams, LA's other team, fell from the top spot to No. 3

after Sunday night's 15-6 loss to the Chicago Bears at Soldier Field. The Rams return to Sunday night play this week when they host the Eagles.

"The Bears just proved you can shut down the Rams' offense if you can shut down (running back) Todd Gurley,"

said Ira Kaufman of Fox 13 in Tampa, Florida. "Difficult, but not impossible."

The Bears' win helped them move up one spot to No. 6.

The New England Patriots slipped a spot to No. 5 after their improbable 34-33 loss to Miami on the final play as

the Dolphins scored on a pass and double lateral to complete a 69-yard pass.

It was the longest play from

MIDDLE

From Page 28

Meanwhile, Blanco added that CCOPSA will also kick off the varsity and middle school basketball leagues in the first quarter of 2019.

"The basketball schedule has not been finalized, but we intend to start the season in

TWIN

From Page 28

the Lady Geckos' second squad, their efforts were not enough to vault them over SIS 2, which celebrated its first victory in the tournament after dropping its first two matches. Agape remains winless and fell to a 0-2.

The pair of victories in the girls division allowed SIS to sweep its Tuesday triple-header, as the school also won its duel against Mt. Carmel in the boys division. Mili Saiki coaches both the SIS 1 girls team and SIS boys team and was proud of the squads' recent success. While she ac-

TANHOLDINGS

From Page 28

Guam is sort of a reward for the players' hard work in the 2018 season and a great experience for the team.

"The girls have been improving since last year and even had a good start for this season. I think it's a good reward for them," Phan said.

Before the Fall league was suspended, TanHoldings managed to win three of its four

Baltimore Ravens running back Gus Edwards (35) is tackled by Kansas City Chiefs cornerback Kendall Fuller (23) and defensive back Daniel Sorensen (49) during the first half of an NFL football game in Kansas City, Mo., Sunday, Dec. 9, 2018.

scrimmage to win a game with no time remaining in the fourth quarter since the 1970 AFL-NFL merger.

Another team that fell in the poll after losing was the Houston Texans. The Texans slipped two spots to No. 7 after being defeated by the Colts 24-21 to end their nine-game winning streak.

The Seattle Seahawks and Dallas Cowboys each moved up a spot to Nos. 8 and 9 after winning at home last week. Both 8-5 teams improved their playoff position in the NFC.

The reeling Pittsburgh Steelers, who have lost three in a row, dropped two places to round out the top 10. The Steelers, who have a half-game lead in the AFC North, host the Patriots on Sunday in a key AFC showdown.

February for varsity," Blanco stated. "[The varsity season] was originally scheduled for January to coincide with PSS varsity basketball, but since the storm, our CCOPSA seasons got delayed."

Blanco added that the middle school season will take place shortly after the varsity competition wraps up.

knowledge that coaching two highly-skilled teams is tiring, she nonetheless enjoys the opportunity to invest in the teams' growth and development.

"It's tiring, but I love volleyball, and I love dedicating my time to it," Saiki said. "The boys and girls are very excited, so when you see that they want to improve and that they love volleyball, you just do it."

Meanwhile, the high school games will resume today with SIS squaring off against GCA in both the boys and girls division at the Eagles court in Navy Hill. Over in As Lito, SIS 2 will host MCS' varsity team, while the latter's JV crew will take on Agape.

matches in the girls U16 division, placing second behind the unbeaten Kanoa (4-0-0) in the team standings of the seven-squad field.

"The girls always play their best in every game. Even when they used to finish last in the youth league, they still continue to show up and play. As their coach, that's one thing I am proud of. I'm happy that our team gets to go to Guam—the girls deserve it," Phan said.

Big Ben OK, Boswell not as Steelers weigh changes

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Ben Roethlisberger's ribs are bruised but not broken.

The Pittsburgh Steelers believe the same could be said about their wildly uneven season.

Roethlisberger believes he'll play on Sunday when New England visits Heinz Field, one of the few certainties for a team in search of answers thanks to a three-game losing streak, the latest setback a baffling 24-21 defeat in Oakland that included Roethlisberger missing most of the second half after taking a shot to the ribs, another late meltdown by the defense and the latest botched kick by Chris Boswell.

"Whenever talking about consistent failures in recent weeks, it's usually a multitude of things," coach Mike Tomlin said Tuesday. "It's all of the above. We're open to change, going to make discussions regarding change."

Starting, potentially, at placekicker.

Boswell was a Pro Bowler in 2017—a season in which he drilled three game-winning field goals—and signed a contract extension in August that runs through 2022. Yet he has struggled with consistency this season.

When his left foot gave way on the final snap in Oak-

land, turning his potentially game-tying 40-yard attempt into a line drive that smacked into the sea of players in front of him, it marked his 11th missed kick this season (six field goals, five extra points). He missed just 13 combined kicks from 2015-17.

Tomlin said the team plans "to explore options that gives us the very best chances of the ball going through the upright this weekend." That includes holding tryouts to give others a look, though Tomlin admitted there isn't exactly much to choose from in mid-December.

"We're cognizant of what's available," Tomlin said. "The prudent approach is to include Chris in those options."

There are no such questions at quarterback despite an odd sequence in Oakland that led to Roethlisberger standing on the sideline in the fourth quarter while backup Josh Dobbs tried to build on a four-point lead.

The issue? Apparently an ancient X-ray machine at the Coliseum that offered no clarity on the extent of the rib injury Roethlisberger sustained while being driven into the ground late in the second quarter.

Roethlisberger, team physician James Bradley and general manager Kevin Colbert spent all of halftime trying to get a clean X-ray but none

surfaced.

"We never had a full understanding of what the injury was," Tomlin said. "The medical staff treated (Roethlisberger) to the best of our abilities."

Treatment that included "medicating" the 36-year-old quarterback while also keeping him out of the game as a precaution.

Tomlin likened the approach to the one the team took during a wild-card game in Cincinnati three years ago in which Roethlisberger hurt his right (throwing) shoulder at the end of the third quarter.

In that game, Roethlisberger stayed off the field until the Bengals rallied to take the lead in the final minutes. Roethlisberger came on and—with more than a little help from Cincinnati—helped the Steelers rally to the victory.

It nearly happened again in Oakland. Roethlisberger completed all six of his passes on Pittsburgh's penultimate drive, the last a 1-yard touchdown pass to JuJu Smith-Schuster that put Pittsburgh in front 21-17.

"We would only re-insert him if we felt it was necessary," Tomlin said. "We appreciate what he was able to do ... obviously it didn't end in the way that we would like."

Roethlisberger said during

his weekly radio appearance Tuesday he expects to face the Patriots (9-4).

Tomlin indicated pain management will be the biggest concern. Roethlisberger rarely practices on Wednesdays and there's a chance he could be given an additional day off.

Tomlin said the team did not file a complaint with the league about the X-ray machine in Oakland and declined to use it as an excuse for any of the decision-making on the sideline or the play on the field. He's well aware Pittsburgh's issues extend far beyond Boswell, sloppy turf or outdated medical equipment.

The defense has allowed second-half leads to get away each of the past three weeks. The Raiders, who came in tied with San Francisco for the worst record in the league, went the length of the field twice in the final 10 minutes, just as the Los Angeles Chargers at Heinz Field did the week prior while storming back from a 16-point deficit to pull out a 33-30 victory.

While Tomlin cautioned the defensive tweaks he's considering might not be "noticeable to the naked eye" he's aware the Steelers—their AFC North lead over Baltimore down to a half-game—are in serious need of a kick-start.

Mt. Carmel School vs Saipan International School

PHOTOS By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN



A Saipan International School player serves to Mt. Carmel School during their game in the boys division of the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association High School Volleyball League last Tuesday at the MCS court in Chalan Kanoa.



A Mt. Carmel School player, third left, dinks the ball, while a Saipan International School defender attempts to block him.



A Saipan International School player swings the ball over, while two Mt. Carmel School players wait for their turn to hit the leather.



Mt. Carmel School coach Don Cabrera talks to his players during a timeout.



A Saipan International School player tosses the ball over.



Saipan International School coach Mili Saiki gives instructions to her players.



Saipan International School's A.J. Hudkins spikes the ball.



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28 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2018

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

TanHoldings FC to play in Guam

Twin wins for SIS; GCA prevails



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Malika Miyawaki, seen here tossing the ball, plays for Saipan International School 1, which is still unbeaten in the CCOPSA high school volleyball league.



By **ROBY N. PAMINTUAN**
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CORRESPONDENT

Grace Christian Academy and Saipan International Schools' girls teams secured wins over their respective opponents in the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association High School Volleyball League last Tuesday.

The Lady Eagles hosted Mt. Carmel School's junior varsity squad and coasted to a 25-7, 25-7 victory. With the win, GCA is still undefeated, as it improved to a 2-0 record, while the Lady Knights slid to a 0-3 slate.

Things didn't fare well for MCS' varsity team either, as it failed to defend its homecourt against SIS 1. The Lady Geckos overwhelmed MCS in two sets, 25-11, 25-15, as the former have yet to drop a game and perched atop the team standings with their 3-0 record. Mt. Carmel's varsity crew, on the other hand absorbed its first loss of the season after a 2-0 start.

The Lady Geckos made a twin kill last Tuesday, as SIS 2 prevailed against a reeling Agape Christian School in three back-and-forth sets, 25-19, 17-25, 15-12. While the Lady Torchbearers closely competed with

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A TanHoldings FC player, right, intercepts a pass intended for a Southern United player during their girls U16 division game in the 2018 NMIFA Fall Youth League last October at the NMI Soccer Training Center.

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER

Tan Holdings Football Club's girls U15 team will be participating in the Guam U15 Girls Friendlies next week.

The club is fielding a 15-player squad in the event that will run from Dec. 20 to 23 at the Guam Football Association National Training Center in Dededo. The team is made up of Judy Ann Andebor, Allyssa Mae Angeles, Emalyn and Mary Joy Aniana, Christine Mae and Clair Eliesa Barrozo, Jenny Ann and Julie Ann Capayas, Marinel Falalimpa, Stephanie Flores, Sydney Camille



Hinds, Tyana Kristine Hix, Lovely Joey Loyola, and Rizza Relucio. Liz Phan will coach the girls U15 crew and she will be assisted by C.J. Barroza.

The visiting team will be going up against four squads in a 9v9 format and is hoping that the chemistry the players have will make up for the lack of enough practice time to prepare for the short competition. The group is bannered by the core of TanHoldings U16 team that played in the suspended 2018 NMIFA Fall Youth League.

"We only have about a week to prepare before we leave for Guam on Dec. 20 and because of the super typhoon (Yutu), all soccer activities have been put to a stop. It's been almost two months since the youth league and so the girls hardly ever touched a soccer ball save for when they are playing around at the TSL Sports Complex's shelter," Phan said.

"I don't know what to expect from our opponents, but we always try to play with the cards we are dealt with. The girls are showing up to practice and it's really great how they start warming up and doing a few drills on their own while they wait for me to arrive. That's like, the cherry on top in their overall improvement as a team. They take initiative," the coach added.

Phan also said that the event in

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Middle school v-ball finals rescheduled

By **ROBY N. PAMINTUAN**
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CORRESPONDENT

The highly anticipated championship match between Grace Christian Academy 1 and Agape Christian School 1 in the 2018-2019 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Middle School Volleyball League has been rescheduled for next month.

According to league chair John Blanco, officials decided to push back the title game that was originally set early this week because they have difficulty in securing a neutral court to host the finale. With the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium sustaining massive damage due to Super Typhoon Yutu and other courts also currently either unavailable or unsuitable to host the championship

match, CCOPSA league officials have opted to reschedule the game in January (exact date will be announced as soon as a venue is secured)

Blanco advised the general public interested in watching the championship match to like and follow their Facebook page, "CCOPSA Sports," to get updates regarding the finale and future CCOPSA news.

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ROBY N. PAMINTUAN

Grace Christian Academy 1's Soleil Lamar gets ready to serve to Agape Christian School 2 during their semis game in the CCOPSA middle school volleyball league last October at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. GCA 1 won and will face Agape 1 in the finals next month.

